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Why Doctor Dobson Became a Quack

NOYES

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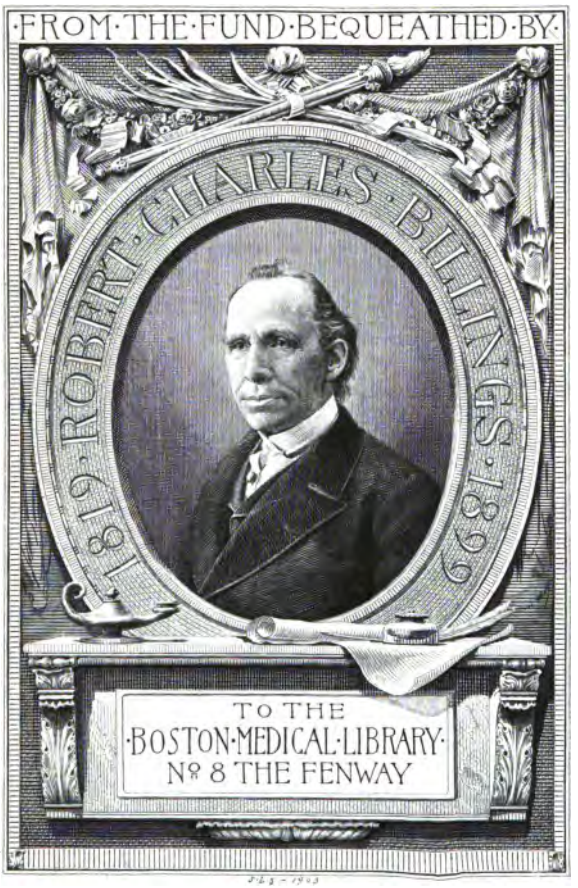
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Why Doctor Dobson Became a Quack

and

Other Stories

BY

P. J. NOYES

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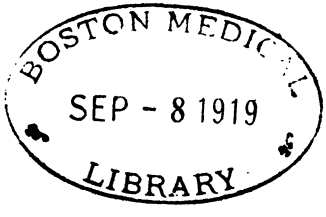

PREFACE.

If this story lacks the literary technique demanded for critical approval, it may be proper to state, not for the purpose of apology, but as an explanation, that it is the maiden effort of a man 67 years of age, who never went to school (any to speak of) but whose educational advantages were sacrificed by being four years at the front during the war. So the author makes no claim to literary grace or elegance, and only hopes that the story may in some slight degree controvert that eternal gullibility which makes possible the calling of the medical quack.

Instead of stereotyped phraseology and severe logic, so often characterizing efforts along this line, a lighter vein of humor, satire and romance has been attempted; but it is hoped that the deeper and more serious thread, that is designed to run through it, may not escape the reader, but that its influence may be to stimulate the substitution of common judgment and common sense for the blind, unthinking credulity which is responsible for the distinguishing disgrace of this country and age.—*Medical Quackery.*

P. J. Noyes, Apothecary, Lancaster, N. H.

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WHY DOCTOR DOBSON BECAME A QUACK

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Why Dr. Dobson Became a Quack

CHAPTER I.

My father was born on a small farm in the town of Kiddersville, in a remote part of Maine. The only book that his mother possessed besides the Bible was a worn copy of Shakespeare, and, having read it until she could repeat the entire book, she naturally resorted to it for a name for her first born, so my father became handicapped with the name of Lysander Demitrius Dobson. Whether it was this heavy burden, or whether it was inherent, or both, I am told he had the vacation habit fully developed at an early age—a habit which seemed to grow on him as he grew up, for he was generally on a vacation, and when he was not so employed he was resting. He was always tired, and, being an only son, his mother sympathized with him in his constant effort to avoid work. His father and mother died in due time and left him with the small farm. He soon got married, took his wife home and started in to let the farm support him without effort, as it had done up to this time, and he seemed not to realize that it might not continue to do so, but by the avails from mortgages it did continue to be ample until the limit of that industry was reached. Then happened what always does with lazy, incompetent men. His wife (my mother) took matters into her own hands, moved to the small village of the town, where, by dint of doing

washing for summer boarders, raising chickens, taking boarders, and by various other expedients, she managed to support the family. At this time I had successfully passed through the somewhat important event of having been born, and had attained to the age of ten years, an age when a live New England boy is usually fully occupied with various important enterprises.

The village, in its social and business features, was a type of New England villages remote from railroads and telegraph. There was the one solitary store, with its heterogeneous stock of merchandise, running through the whole gamut of the limited wants of a primitive community. The large, square room was frescoed overhead by crockery, with handles suspended from nails driven into the beams, also by shovels, clotheslines, halters, tin ware, washtubs, pails, rolling pins, axes, and other staples "too numerous to mention," as the ancient advertisement reads—all decorated with festoons of dried apple, giving an artistic finish to the whole arrangement. And over all a subdued harmonious veiling woven by time, flies, spiders and dust.

This arrangement was made by an ancestor of the present proprietor, who could not be induced to disturb the arrangement, for ostensibly sentimental reasons, but really from the dislike of the effort involved in dislodging any of the articles from their ancient resting places, and by reason of an accident which will be described later. The walls of the room supported the usual rambling shelving, in front of which were high counters, forming a hollow square, in the centre of which was that most conspicuous piece of store furniture, the box-stove, surrounded with a box filled with

sand, peanut shells, cast-off tobacco quids, and miscellaneous contributions by the generations of loafers who had enjoyed the hospitality of this common rendezvous.

It may have been cleaned out in bygone days, but at the time of which I write no one recalled so epoch-making an event. This relic of the past had been handed down through successive generations to the present proprietor. The family name was Joggins—a name that had long been identified with the growth, prosperity and every material and moral interest of the town. The present incumbent's given name was Abijah, which naturally contracted to the euphonious abbreviation of Bige.

Bige was an unique character, and as he unconsciously exerted an influence which had much to do with the fortunes of my father and myself, I should be remiss in my duty did I fail to record the peculiarities, virtues and weaknesses of the man who afforded me much boyish amusement, and indirectly was my benefactor.

His personal appearance was striking, due to congenital idiosyncracies, and a peculiar accident by which he had lost an eye. It has been stated that he never broke into the artistic arrangement of the ancient stock of goods stored on the beams overhead in his store; but one day he was induced to break over a life-long habit by the importunities of an old lady customer who wanted a rolling-pin of ancient pattern, which had formed the center of an artistic grouping of warming-pans, candle-moulds, sheep-shears and nutmeg-graters. As if in resentment of this unhallowed intrusion on its ancient rights at the first touch the string holding it parted, and the pin landed with its small end in Bige's left eye, with the result of its com-

plete extinction. The loss of this eye soon won him the distinguishing appellation of "one-eyed Bige."

This deformity might in time have escaped notice and remark, had his other features contributed more to a uniform comeliness, but they did not. His nose did not seem to be at all ambitious at the start, but gradually became more enterprising as it progressed, until it terminated in a development looking somewhat like the end of a baseball bat, with two oblong red indentations. Its color was a deep maroon, and it was studded with short stiff scattered hairs, justifying the suspicion that Bige was not a member of the prohibition party. Such a conclusion would be entirely unjust, as his libations were confined wholly to hard cider, and in his ignorance of the fact that fermentation of apple juice produces alcohol, which in the form of beer or whiskey he would have looked on with horror, his deep religious and temperance principles were never shocked. On the contrary, his religion seemed a more tangible thing after he had imbibed freely of his favorite beverage, and he daily sent up a prayer of thanksgiving to the Creator of good cider apples.

He had the misfortune to stutter, and the form it assumed was peculiar. He could not pronounce a word until he had said hi-hi-hi, repeating it six times, then he could continue to talk without interruption till he came to a stop, when the prelude would have to be repeated before he could start again. What little hair he had was of a goldenrod complexion, and was combined into an elongated cone on the top of his head, looking very much like a horn of plenty. He had never been able to raise a beard, but caressed a little growth looking like the scattered down on a young fledgeling.

His striking personal appearance might have been less emphasized by the defunct eye had he submitted himself to a glass eye maker and had his remaining eye duplicated. But sentiment and economy were two of Bige's leading characteristics. There had been a glass eye in the family for many generations, and its last possessor, a maiden aunt of Bige's, had recently abandoned its use—she had died—and in her will had bequeathed it to her only living nephew—Bige. The eye was originally made for the maternal great-grandmother of our hero, and from that time down to the present some member of the Joggins family kept the eye in active service. Indeed, the oldest inhabitant could not recall the time, or of hearing of a time, when there was not a one-eyed Joggins. So when Bige lost his eye it excited neither surprise nor comment beyond the observation that, as he was the last of his race, it was nothing short of his duty to furnish occupation for this historic eye. There was a legend that had spread to surrounding towns, and which was quite well authenticated, that this eye had been in use so long that it had become vitalized, and possessed the power of seeing. Bige shared in this belief, and the first time he tried it on declared that he could see better than before he lost his eye. The fact that he was very near-sighted, and could distinguish objects but a short distance away, no doubt helped to make the delusion seem real. But it must be admitted that the installation of this historic and much prized piece of furniture did not in any degree add to the personal attractiveness of its proud possessor. The color of this eye was a delicate azure, which had become still further softened by age. And here it may be remarked that it did not

match the color of the sound eye of its original possessor. She had, however, a great admiration for that color in eyes, so against the protest of her friends, she said that since she had always longed for azure eyes, and now had the opportunity, she was going to have one eye that would satisfy her longing. And she logically reasoned that if she should lose the other eye, as she might, then she could have the artificial eyes matched and her happiness would be complete; but as the history of the Joggins family makes no mention of her ambition and longing for matched azure eyes being gratified, it may be assumed that she carried her disappointment to the grave.

In a brief review of this famous glass eye, digression should be made to note some of the Comedies and Tragedies of which it was an "eye witness" during its long and varied career. It was a fact of wide comment that there were an unusual number of people in this and surrounding towns, especially women, who had had the misfortune to lose an eye, and the Joggins' eye being the only one in the whole region, was in constant demand for dress-up and state occasions. One of Miss Joggins' neighbors in particular, a spinster of debatable age, by name Jone Peterson, was annoyingly neighborly in her frequent requests for the loan of the eye.

When equipped with only one eye, Miss Peterson was not well calculated to excite undue admiration by reason of her personal beauty, but with the installation of the Joggins' eye, which was an exact match for her own eye, the transformation was instant and marvelous. Time took a backward step by many years and she was positively attractive—and she knew it.

While thus arrayed, on the occasion of a quilting bee in an adojining town, she met the Rev. Mr. Straw, pas-

tor of the Methodist church, who had recently been bereft of the Third Partner of his Sorrows, leaving nine children of promiscuous maternal blood. He was at once impressed with her personal beauty and other essential qualities, and at parting, with a pressure of the hand of more than pastoral warmth begged the privilege of calling on her. She blushingly assented with the proviso that he call on a certain day, at a certain hour, her quick woman's intuition instantly warning her of the necessity of a full equipment of eyes for an event fraught with such momentous possibilities.

The intervening time, to Miss Peterson, was filled with days and nights of mixed blissful anticipations and heart-bursting doubts. She exacted a solemn promise from Miss Joggins that on no account should the eye be loaned to anyone except herself until the event had passed, and a successful consummation assured. The day and hour arrived, as days and hours have the habit of doing, also the Rev. Mr. Straw, not a moment late.

The interview was pleasant and delightfully suggestive to both. Several times she thought he was approaching the vital question, as indeed he was, but as he had not thought out a formula for approaching so delicate a subject, different from the one he had been in the habit of using on such occasions, and as he felt it did not adequately express all the tenderness he felt, he resolved to postpone it for another visit. His leave-taking was of the tenderest nature, emphasized by long and significant hand pressures. The exact date of the next meeting was agreed upon. Miss Peterson confided to Miss Joggins that she felt sure that at the next interview the momentous event of her life would be happily settled.

As soon as the Rev. Mr. Shaw had formulated a satisfactory expression for his tender feelings, he became impatient of the slow passing of time, and so planned a little surprise for the object of his adoration, by anticipating by a day and several hours the event which would for the fourth time make him the happiest man on earth.

Miss Peterson was cleaning house clothed in an exasperating rig, and with that blood-curdling housecleaning expression of countenance that causes every married man to wonder what he ever saw in his wife to admire. She was a good housekeeper, and at the present moment, with an eye single, or rather a single eye to this semi-annual purification, she was in the act of reaching for an imaginary cobweb, when the door-bell rang. Soon as she could divest herself of brush, dust-rag, etc., she opened the door and there stood the Rev. Mr. Straw.——Here let the veil of compassion hide the scene from vulgar and unsympathetic eyes.

That night when she prayed, she wailed between her sobs, "Thy will be done," with a mental reservation that the good Lord has at times a peculiar and unfeeling way of chastening those whom he loves.

Bige's well eye was a seal brown, and being cross-eyed it seemed to be preoccupied in watching its artificial companion, while the latter seemed to completely ignore the presence of its inquisitive modern confrere. As this eye had originally been fitted to a socket of somewhat abnormal formation, it was rarely able to adapt itself to its subsequent wearers so as to "look natural." In the case of its present environment it was a third larger than the natural eye. This so distended the eye that the eyelids could not wink, so that

function fell to the other eye, which at once restored Nature's equilibrium by winking twice where it normally winked but once. And then its axis was so shaped that when in place it either looked up at quite a sharp angle or down at the same angle depending on which side up the eye was adjusted. Bige utilized this circumstance in a way that would do credit to a more resourceful mind. When about his business he wore it turned down, as he said it gave him an air of greater attention to business. On Sundays when he went to church he reversed it, as he thought it gave him a more devout appearance. But he found ample compensation for any inconvenience arising from the artificial eye in this fact. He invariably went to sleep as the minister was announcing his text, and the adjustment of this eye being at an angle of vision which took the parson squarely on the top of his bald head, it gave him the appearance of being a very attentive and devout listener, while with the other eye he was oblivious to all external things. By this happy combination he not only enjoyed a reputation for devout attention while he was enjoying a refreshing nap, but he escaped the mental disturbance by which his sensitive nature would have been oppressed by Parson Brownlow's weekly reiteration of the prospective unbounded joys of Heaven, and the equally emphatic assurance of the impossibility of anyone's getting there, with very rare exceptions. The figure of the camel and the needle was invariably utilized to drive home this comforting climax.

Parson Brownlow had been brought up in the Presbyterian faith and was well grounded in the doctrine of Election, Predestination, etc., and while the doctrine was at variance with that of the Baptist church, of

which he had been pastor for forty years, yet he had preached it so long that his congregation had never doubted but that it was good fundamental Baptist doctrine.

Besides being impelled to preach this doctrine from a sense of duty, he knew that it appealed with great satisfaction to his deacons and the members of the church who were satisfied beyond a doubt that their "calling and election" had been made sure; for the satisfaction of having the greatest of life's problems favorably settled is infinitely enhanced by the equal certainty that one's neighbors are predestined to the region of an uncomfortably elevated temperature.

The "Amen" always brought Bige back from the delights of passively unconscious devotion, and his well eye immediately glared across the bridge of his nose to see if its companion had been attending to business. On his return from church, Bige at once replaced his Sunday attire with his every-day clothes and reversed his eye to its business position.

Abijah Joggins had other striking peculiarities, but I will mention but one other and that was his height; he was six feet four, made up mostly of neck and heels. This combined with the features already described with which Nature and art had endowed him, produced a being so near the freak order, that had he realized and appreciated the fact at its real value, he might have won a fortune as one of Nature's experiments at a dime museum.

Bige and my father were, from the first time they met, drawn together by the magnet of Congeniality. They had many characteristics in common. They were both philosophers—of the kind that aptly come under

the designation of cracker-box philosophers. They were both sentimentalists, both very religious, both Presbyterians—although they supposed they were Baptists. Both lazy, both "ailin' " the greater part of the time. They had all the diseases catalogued by the various patent medicine promoters which included all that suffering humanity has ever experienced, real or imaginary, and they were constantly looking for more.

Their reading was confined to a religious paper—"The Saints' Delight"—which edifying sheet usually devoted four pages to picturing the unalloyed joys of Heaven, awaiting the elect, and twelve pages to an exposition of the various means of which the elect might avail themselves to avoid going there. The statements made in this paper, either in the advertising pages or editorially, regarding the wonderful nature of the various "discoveries," were received by Bige and father as truths which to question would be as profane and sacrilegious as to question the Bible itself. This source of infallible information was supplimented by the voluminous, edifying, hair-raising nostrum literature to which the public is indebted for its medical education. They never doubted the statements they read, and were duly impressed with the wonderful knowledge and wisdom so lavishly disseminated by this inspired "medical" literature. Whenever a new "discovery" was projected into their waiting, receptive vision, as a specific for some newly discovered symptom, Bige and father were always delighted, for it invariably proved to be an accurate and startling description of a symptom which they had both experienced for a long time, but of whose terrible significance they had been ignorant until this timely and Providential warn-

ing was placed in their hands. And to ward off the fatal climax a dozen bottles of the great "blessing to suffering humanity" would at once be added to Bige's stock.

Father's daily regimen was substantially as follows (subject to readjustment on the appearance of a new medicine): Before breakfast a large dose of Dr. Koop's "Great Tonic Appetizer." This was necessary, for father never got up to breakfast until mother had called him at least three times, and then his morning salutation would be in the nature of a complaint of the hardships of life, and mother's unfeeling treatment in compelling him to get up at eight o'clock in the summer and nine o'clock in the winter. Of course he could have no appetite at so unreasonable an hour, consequently the necessity of an appetizer. Mother frequently remarked on the efficacy of the medicine, made painfully evident by father's enormous appetite, and she would frequently remonstrate with him for taking such large doses, for as poor mother was obliged to provide everything by hard work, she was interested in curtailing our appetites rather than stimulating them. After breakfast he took an L. W. dinner-pill to keep his food from hurting him. After he had said prayers, kicked the dog, cuffed one or two of the children, and scolded mother for some fancied neglect of his comfort, he betook himself to Bige's store.

Bige's daily routine in respect to medicine was about the same as father's. He lived in a room out of his store and did his own housekeeping. And while he had no trouble in inducing a vigorous appetite for his breakfast to which he attributed the wonderful and potent properties of the famed appetizer, he found much

difficulty in procuring a breakfast to fit his appetite. Rather than exert himself in the application of his limited knowledge of the culinary art, he usually dined on crackers and cheese, his economical habits restricting his indulgence to the broken unsalable crackers and crumbs of cheese. He did, however, on rare occasions allow himself the luxury of a package of breakfast food, when by reason of age, or otherwise, it was rejected by the summer boarding-house keepers. And here I will parenthetically remark that in after years I learned that this much prized and never failing appetizer was composed of a mixture of bad whiskey, hard cider, and the waste from a brewery, with a trace of gentian to give it the semblance of a medicine. At 10:30 o'clock they both took a dose of Prof. Hod's remedy for the Tired Feeling. Father prided himself on having reduced his habits to a system of perfect regularity. He often boasted of the possession of this great virtue of punctuality, and he had a legitimate right to do so, for this one possession was the only asset to which he could lay any claim. So he was always at his meals on the minute, and if the meal was delayed, by reason of mother's extra washings, or because she could not make the green wood burn, father was not slow to draw a vigorous invidious comparison between his promptness and her lack of that saving grace. He attributed her slothfulness, as he called it, to squandering her time in idle gossip with the neighbors, and in rocking the cradle when he said she could easily keep the baby quiet with soothing syrup. Mother never made any reply, but "took her medicine," which was the only kind that she could ever afford to take. Before dinner father took a dose of Dr. Mull's "Helps

to the Appetite." After dinner a dose of "Lightning Digester," then back to the store as the clock struck one. At 3.15 p. m. he and Bige took a dose of "Prof. Swoop's Instant Vitalizer." Before supper a dose of "Hart's Alimentary," then back to the store promptly at 6 o'clock and home at 9, and to bed after taking a dose of "Doneby's Sedative," which produced "restful and refreshing sleep."

"The Saints' Delight" had recently appeared with a full page advertisement of a "new discovery" which was a specific for the cure and prevention of creeping paralysis. Bige, being a dealer, had simultaneously received a package of literature illuminating the whole subject, its symptoms, prevention and cure—of the years spent by the "discoverer" in research, experiments, disappointments, failures, and in the final and "glorious triumph over all difficulties which always rewards self-sacrifice for the benefit of suffering humanity," and now "for the first time in the history of medicine, from Esculapius down to the present time, Dr. LaRierre's Miracle for the prevention and cure of Creeping Paralysis is offered to a suffering and helpless world." The literature gave out the startling and impressive fact that this fatal disease was becoming alarmingly prevalent, from the fact that it prevailed mainly among the leisurely class, a class of our population rapidly increasing. As Father and Bige could reasonably claims to such class distinction, this information was of the most startling nature. A long list of symptoms were given in black type, among which were: "No desire to work; after sitting in one position for several hours a feeling of numbness in the lower limbs; inability to stand long without feeling tired; a drowsy

feeling after eating; loss of nerve force," etc., etc. Bige and father had for a long time experienced all the symptoms listed in the marvelous literature and they were seized with consternation. Bige said he would order some by the next stage. Father read all the startling and educating literature to mother, and said there could be no doubt that he was rapidly becoming a victim to this dreaded disease, and that he should not delay a day in procuring an ample supply of the medicine. With a trembling voice and tears in his eyes he drew a pathetic picture of the helpless condition of mother and the children if he should be taken away and they be left to all the hardships of a cold and unfeeling world.

Mother was not much impressed with the appeal beyond the cost, as buying father's medicine took a large share of her hard earned pittance. She always rebelled when a new demand was made for that purpose. Father always consoled her with the fact that Bige let him have all his medicines at cost, so that he got a dollar bottle for 75 cents and he urged the mathematical demonstration that the 25 cents saved on every bottle amounted to a very snug sum in a year—indeed, enough to go a long way toward the support of the family, and if he did nothing else she should give him credit for this great saving. Mother was unable to see the logic of this argument, and said that when it cost 75 cents to save 25 cents, and you did not get the 25 cents at that, she thought it was a long road to wealth. Father said he never saw a woman with a head for business, and it was a waste of time to try to make her understand a business proposition, simple as this one was. But mother, as usual, gave in and the medicine was procured.

Father and Bige took this medicine about 4 o'clock p. m., the only time that was not occupied, and from the first dose father declared he felt better; some of the symptoms soon disappeared, especially the loss of appetite, but of this he was not sufficiently sure to dispense with his appetizer. Besides the medicines that have been enumerated, father kept on hand, ready for an emergency, kidney cures, heart cures, headache cures, catarrh cures; in fact, everything to combat any of the numerous symptoms that were liable to make their appearance at inopportune and unexpected times.

Father's daily routine of contemplating his numerous diseases, taking his many life savers—eating, sleeping, and punctilious, consciencious loafing, was only varied by attendance at the weekly prayer meeting. All of father's reserve physical, mental and spiritual force was "let loose" in prayer. He was always called upon to lead, and for this supreme weekly effort he always fortified himself with an extra pint of good old cider. That prayer was the event of the meeting, and the preliminary exercises were regarded as only a spiritual scoring up for the supreme moment when father should get the word "go." And when Parson Brownlow, with becoming deliberation, in measured tones, said: "Brother Dobson, will you lead us in prayer?" the hum of gossip was hushed, the wandering thoughts of the frivolous immediately recalled and the devout became more radiant.

Father always responded to this invitation with a becoming hesitancy, but finally arose with deliberate solemnity as a fitting prelude to the coming "address to the Throne." With a rapid survey of the audience which plainly implied that he "knew where he was at,"

and describing a graceful elliptic with his arms, he placed himself in an attitude of supplication, rolling his eyes upward as if to fix the attention of Deity, and was off. There was never the slightest variation in the wording or the manner of delivery of this prayer, yet it was always delivered with the effect of a spontaneous inspiration. He commenced by reminding the Almighty of his great wisdom, followed by complimentary references to the evidence of that wisdom and consideration in the tender care of his faithful children, in providing so bountifully for them; he would then soar into realms of blissful anticipation of the never ending joys awaiting the elect, ending in a peroration which carried the spiritually responsive to the height of ecstasy, and the doubtful ones to the borders of despair.

This consisted of all the platitudes at his command, showered on the Almighty for his wisdom, mercy and justice in predestinating the large majority of the human race to the tortures of the "fires that are never quenched." The prayer was liberally punctuated with "Amens," "Glory to Gods" and groans of the "brethern," and the sighs of approval and nasal sniffings of ecstasy of the "sisterin," and the final and prolonged "Amens" acted as a parachute to bring back the spiritually exalted and land them again in a no less delightful reality. After "passing the hat" which generally came back with a few pennies contributed by two of the "lost sinners," the meeting was closed by singing the old and comforting hymn in which were mingled the discordant voices of all the "elect," "I'm glad Salvation is free." The parson did not join in the singing.

It cannot be denied that father's prayer deservedly

gained for him a wide celebrity; and when the meeting closed he was the recipient of many compliments and congratulations. Yet, young as I was at the time, a vague undefined feeling would come over me that another refrain to that prayer might have been heard—that of the sound of mother's washboard and a soft lullaby to her fretful baby—music recorded on the plastic composite record of human suffering, love and devotion, to be reproduced in that far-off mysterious culmination when all these meaningless, hypocritical performances will be dumped on the waste heap of folly, inhumanity, and insincerity.

Bige's store, as has been intimated, was the rendezvous of all the chronic village loafers, and had been from a time antedating the present generation. There was a legend that in former times, when the store was under more enterprising and successful direction than at present, that comfortable chairs were provided for the weary ones, but the present crop of descendants was obliged to content itself with cracker-boxes and nail-kegs. Also, in more prosperous times, quintals of codfish furnished both seats and entertainment, but Bige had surrendered the Joggins' reputation for hospitality by removing this delicacy to a safe distance from these impecunious philosophers. One chair had survived the wreck of time, and by common consent was assigned to father, for the reason perhaps that he took the lead in all great involved discussions, and enjoyed the indisputable position of oracle of the village. All questions of philosophy, theology, history or science were referred to him for arbitration.

Father's reputation for learning and a superior insight into all subjects which came under discussion did

not proceed from any information or positive conclusions, but rather from a want of them. The only subject on which he would ever express himself with any positiveness was religion and predestination. When any proposition was propounded to him, he would put on a vague, mysterious look, close his eyes, and appear in the depths of profound, brain wrecking thought. emitting a low gutteral sound which ordinarily would indicate sleep, but in his case it was attributed to the intense working of his brain in the conscientious effort to arrive at a correct conclusion. He would remain in this impressive attitude for a longer or a shorter time, depending on the gravity of the subject under consideration, then opening his eyes, gaze straight ahead with a blank stare, which was evidence that he had unraveled the knotty involutions of the subject and the light which they were waiting for was about to break. His answer, which came with painful deliberation and caution, would generally be the profound observation that it might be so and it might be otherwise, but he had grave doubts whether either was right. This answer was generally received with much satisfaction and heightened respect for his careful and conscientious treatment of all great vital questions.

The leisurely portion of the population of Kiddersville—that is to say, those who were members of the "club," held three regular sessions daily—forenoon, afternoon and evening—at Bige's store for the discussion of grave questions of philosophy, religion, and the misdeeds, mistakes and what "folks said" about their neighbors. The membership of the club was limited to six—never exceeding or falling short of this number. Sometimes a vacancy occurred by death, but this epoch-

forming event was of rare occurrence, for the genus loafer rarely dies, at least his normal condition is so near that of suspended animation that it is a long time before he can fully realize that he ought to be buried; but when the vacancy did occur, it seemed to be automatically filled by some mysterious decree of economic adjustment.

At the time which I write the personnel of the club was distinguished by the following roster: Jim Slack, Lem Gibson, Sam Small, Dick Graham, Dan Gibson and father. With the exception of Bige and father they were all sinners—that is, that they could by any possibility be numbered with the elect had never received any serious consideration. They were all punctual in their attendance at the three daily sessions for six week days. Sunday they devoted to rest. Father was always the first arrival to enforce, as he often said, the moral lesson of punctuality, although the boys thought his promptness was for the purpose of securing the only chair, rather than from any moral consideration.

The sessions of the club were characterized by many animated discussions, although the greater part of the time was devoted to long periods of passive somnolence, which were interrupted at rare intervals by the entrance of a customer, such an event being of sufficient importance to stimulate into activity all the latent mental powers of observation, curiosity and expectancy of all the members. The first one to become sufficiently conscious to fully comprehend the importance of the event would of course be Bige, who between business interruptions slumbered comfortably on some pieces of ancient cotton cloth, which had been worn through in

places by long use. By the time Bige got sufficiently restored to the normal to transact business, all the members of the club were sufficiently awake to take a lively interest in the transaction.

All customers, especially if they were women, as soon as they had left the store, became the objects of a fusillade of slander. Each one told what he knew about them or what he thought he knew—what he suspected, what others said about them, etc., etc. The magnitude of the indictment in each case had been arrived at by the accretions of countless repetitions. Every customer that came in was the subject of the same caustic criticism, and had the entire community been brought before a court of justice and the accusations of these six typical loafers taken as evidence, they would all have received a life sentence to the penetentiary. This community, like all other rural communities, was made up of that class in which inhere all those stern moral and religious virtues which are the bulwark of the Nation, and yet these worthless loafers, in the legitimate expression of their depraved natures—the inevitable product of idleness—looking through murky eyes, reflecting still muddier souls, could see nothing in others but a reflection of their own vileness.

Unfortunately this genius for putridity is not monopolized in the genus loafer, but its prototype is found in some women, generally distinguished for religious fervor and constant attendance on all devotional services, but whose greater activity is exercised in injecting sulphureted hydrogen into the neighborhood in which they live.

The club would generally conclude its criticism of persons summing up their religious failings. This

would lead to a general discussion of the subject, and when the scheme of election was reached the fight was on. As father's and Bige's eternal salvation was settled by common consent—especially by their own consent—they of course took the "affirmative" in the discussion. Lem Gibson was the champion in setting forth the views of the opposition. Lem was regarded as a lost sinner, beyond redemption, and his arguments were punctuated and illumed by sulphurous adjectives that would not bear repeating here. It is but justice to observe in passing that, added to an inherited aptitude, Lem had made a study of polysynthetic profanity, and an exhibition of his accomplishments was worth going a long way to hear by those who appreciate and can enjoy true art. So when it got noised about that Lem and father had "locked horns" on the subject of election a crowd was at once attracted, not to hear logic, but to witness the display of sublimated pyrotechnics. Logic had little to do with Lem's argument; he depended more on the force of livid monosyllables.

Father and Bige would have been shocked, but for the fact of long association and that his arguments did not necessitate the effort of an answer. Lem frequently said, when Bige was not in hearing, "why God should select that lantern-jawed, glass-eyed, bald-headed, crane-necked giraffe to enjoy the comforts of Heaven to all eternity and select me and Jim and Sam and Dick and Dan, who have alers lived up to the best light we have had, to be damned, I'll be damned if I can understand; it don't stand to reason; 'taint no fair shakes." Then Dick Graham in a squeaky, falsetto voice would timidly venture the only question that he was ever known to ask during the long and often re-

peated discussions, which was, how he knew the doctrine of election and predestination was true. Father's answer was always the same: he referred them to what was said by Augustin, John Calvin and Aquinas. This formidable statement was so weighty as to be conclusive, for none of them, including father, had the slightest idea of who they were, where they lived, or what they said. If anyone ventured to ask him what they said he always had ready at hand that convenient and final answer: "Read your Bibles and you will not be asking such fool questions." Father had become familiar with these names by hearing them so often repeated by Parson Brownlow, but the logic which the good man evolved from these authorities was too subtle for his understanding, so he contented himself with remembering the names, never doubting that it was good Bible authority.

But what most delighted Lem was to ask father how he knew so positively that he was numbered among the elect. He had the ever-ready and all-convincing answer, "inward consciousness." Now for a knock-down, conclusive, final argument there is nothing to equal "inward consciousness." It is above and beyond the disturbing interference of logic or science, for no one has the slightest idea of what it means; it defies analysis and the most momentous problem can reach a final solution without labor or the inconvenience of thought. When father had vanquished his adversary with this unanswerable argument, had he been satisfied his position would have been unassailable, but the exultation induced by his easy triumph would lead him into dangerous elaborations.

I recall that on one occasion when the situation just

described had been reached, he proceeded to describe a vision that he had had the night before. He said he retired at the usual hour and fell into a peaceful slumber; how long he had slept he did not know, but he found himself in a semi-conscious state and realized that he was surrounded by a soft light, the rays from different directions converging into a halo about his head. He heard the soft murmur of gurgling waters, and in the distance angel voices singing what seemed a soft lullably, so soft and sweet that he soon lapsed into peaceful and undisturbed sleep, all of which meant to him that it was a taste of what was in store for him when he had passed beyond the cares and troubles of this wicked world.

The solemnity and almost awe which this graphic recital had impressed the assembly was rudely broken by Dick Graham, who suggested that the "halo" might have been a reflection from mother's tallow dip, the gurgling water, that running water from her washtub, and the angelic lullaby, that of his poor, tired wife trying to sing her baby to sleep. The members of the club saw the force of this analysis and expressed their approval by roars of laughter, to all of which father responded with dignified and silent indifference, which was taken by the club as a complete triumph over father's many labored and abstruse arguments.

My readers who have followed the uneventful history of Bige do not need to be told that he was not married, but to conclude that he had no connubial aspirations would be entirely wrong, for his longings for relief from his lonely isolation often carried him to the verge of desperation. He was not only consumed by the tender passion but the practical side appealed

strongly to him—that of relief from the burden of doing his own washing, mending, cooking, etc., and for a loving hand to minister to him in his periodic attacks of colic and his numerous other "spells," the misery of which he could see transformed into a positive pleasure under the ministrations of a faithful wife, who would dispense love and ginger tea, and apply mustard plasters with the soft touch of tender sympathy.

Notwithstanding Bige's pensive longing for domestic bliss, he had never been an aggressive lover; indeed, his dreams had been more of an ideal than a personified reality, but his ideal had for some time been materializing in the person of a very attractive young woman, belonging to one of the first families of the town, by name Susan Jane Shedd. When he fully realized that Susan was the exponent of all the worth, beauty and virtues that had inspired his dreams by day and by night, he was completely overcome and stunned by the revelation.

Susan visited the store daily for the mail, and Bige looked forward to her coming with mingled emotions of fear and happiness. When she asked for her mail, with her soft musical voice and a smile that would have sent the blood tingling in the veins of the most indifferent of men, Bige was so agitated that he could only hand out the mail mechanically, or if there was none, to shake his head in the most solemn manner, his embarrassment and agitation added to his impediment of speech rendering an articulate sound an impossibility. Indeed, this was so noticeable that Susan told her folks that she thought Bige had got some new disease and wondered if he had any medicine that would be good for it, little dreaming that he had a real disease—that

of love sickness—and that she herself was the specific for this sporadic "spell."

As the days passed and Bige realized more and more that the time had come when he must do something more than dream, his symptoms became so alarmingly intense that he was in doubt himself whether it was really love or cirrhosis of the liver. He confided all his hopes, fears and symptoms to father, who, after deliberate consideration, assured him that it was a clear case of love—an affection of the heart and not the liver—and from his own experience in such matters he could say without fear of contradiction that there existed but one remedy, and that was the assurance that the object of his adoration reciprocated his passion.

From time immemorial in all small communities—and larger ones for that matter—the tentative campaign of the heart has had its inception in "going home" with the favorite girl from prayer meeting. Whether this practice has been evolved from the prayer meeting, or whether the prayer meeting owes its vitality to the practice, might be difficult to determine, but it can be safely said that were it not for the opportunity thus afforded of making a seemingly formidable initiative comparatively easy, the prayer meeting would lose a potent phase of its "spirituality" and its attendance be restricted to the faithful few.

To see the long line of young men lined up on either side of the walk as meeting lets out, the most aggressive and boldest at the head, the degree of heroism gradually diminishing down the line until at the bottom the most timid is standing in trembling expectancy, generally taking to his heels as the ordeal becomes imminent, is a scene, common as it is, to cause the philosophically in-

clined to indulge in psychological speculation touching its potential in race perpetuation and the joys and sorrows that make up human existence.

Bige having settled down to the solemn fact that he was really in love, soon came to the heroic determination to precipitate matters at the next prayer meeting, and see Susan Jane home. But when he had come to this conclusion, as the only alternative, involving as it did so formidable a problem as his future happiness or misery, its realization presented such blood-curdling difficulties, that for the moment he almost determined to abadon his dream of conjugal bliss, heart-breaking though it was. But no matter how forbidding a situation, familiarity with it softens its terrifying aspects, and so, as its various contingencies revolved through Bige's mind, his agitation became less disturbing, and he boldly faced the formidable task of formulating the language to be used when the crucial opportunity should arrive. This was no easy task, and he arranged the words in many different forms before he was satisfied that they would convey all the tenderness of his overburdened heart. The formula on which he finally settled was this: "Miss Shedd, it would afford me infinite pleasure to be your protector on your way home this evening."

It would not seem that these few words presented much difficulty in committing or remembering, but in the agitated state of his mind they were continually escaping, so he devoted all his spare moments to rehearsing the precious lines. When the longed-for but dreaded evening arrived he arrayed himself in his best, adjusted his glass eye to its reverent position, gave an extra twist to the cornucopia on the top of his head,

took an extra dose of his favorite tonic, and with palpitating heart and cold shivers coursing down his spinal column set out for church. His seat was so located that by turning his head slightly he could get a glimpse of Miss Shedd. And every time she "felt of her belt at the back" his soul was wrung with mingled emotions of love and terror. The service made no impression on him, so intent was he in trying to remember his lines. As the end of the meeting approached, his terror increased, the words seemed to swim before his eyes in a meaningless jumble, and when the audience arose to receive the benediction he mechanically rose with the rest, and when the Amen was pronounced, if it had been his death sentence it could not have had a more paralyzing effect; he stood transfixed, his eyes with a glassy stare—especially his right one.

He remained in this semi-conscious condition until all the people had left the church and was only restored to consciousness by a vigorous rap on the back by the sexton, who told him in no gentle manner to get out. Glancing around to assure himself that the cause of his terror had departed, he hurried home with a confused sense of relief and desperation, took a double dose of "Nervura" and jumped into bed to pass a night of fitful sleep and troubled dreams. The next day he consulted father and told him of his utter failure and confessed that he could never make any progress in that way. Many plans were discussed and abandoned as requiring more heroic action than he was capabe of. Father suggested that he write her and to put it into verse.

Bige had something of the poetic element in his makeup—indeed, he had often given vent to his aspira-

tions and sorrows through the divine medium. He lost no time in acting on father's suggestion in summoning the muses to his aid, but the task was a heavy one. It was weeks before he could get the first line to suit him. During the time that this great effort of his life was assuming form, the object of his hopes came regularly for her mail, and Bige's heart was often wrung by seeing a letter for her postmarked Boston. For the past two summers a young man from the city, a summer boarder, had paid Miss Shedd marked attention, which did not seem to displease her, but on the contrary seemed to afford her much pleasure. The young man was a musician and frequently serenaded her at night with his violin within plain hearing of Bige, every note of which was gall and wormwood to his lacerated soul.

Whenever Miss Shedd entered the store to ask for a letter or to make a purchase, and he had occasion to speak to her, he was obliged to say "hi" at least eight times before he could get started, and if she smiled on him, or thought she did, it was an inspiration under which he would add a line or two to his poem.

After many long and anxious months of harrowing days and sleepless nights, which had so reduced him in flesh and left him with such a haggard look and hectic cough that the neighbors all said Bige was going into consumption. Father urged him to take Pay-so's infallible Consumption Cure. But Bige did not need any advice as to the cause of his feverish condition or the remedy, which was favorable reply to his desperate appeal. His soul's longings were finally crystallized into metric pathos and ran as follows:

To Miss Susan Jane Shedd.

Oh Susan Jane, oh Jane,
Life has but one charm for me,
It's your sweet face
So full of grace
I am longing and waiting for to see.

Oh Susan Jane, oh Jane,
Days I think, nights I dream of thee,
Walking or dreaming
There's only the seeming,
Unless my bride you'll consent to be.

Oh Susan Jane, oh Jane,
I know you would not be so cold
If you knew that in spite
Of loss of appetite,
For thee to this life I still keep hold.

Oh Susan Jane, oh Jane,
I fear you are being fooled by that fellow
Who can do nothing but fiddle
And part his hair in the middle,
And his singing is like an old cow's bellow.

Oh Susan Jane, oh Jane,
Folks say love is but a riddle,
And to marry a stranger
Is a very great danger,
Especially if all he knows is to play a fiddle.

Oh Susan Jane, oh Jane,
If you will promise to be mine,
The days of sorrows
Will all be tomorrows,
And for you every day the sun will shine.

Oh Susan Jane, oh Jane,
The offer I make do not spurn,
My store and goods,
All my breakfast foods,
And all that my hands will ever earn.

Oh Susan Jane, oh Jane,
Be mine, and work you'll never know,
You'll have the richest clothes
And everything that goes
Will be yours to make heaven here below.

This last verse was suggested by father—in fact, the entire "poem" was inspired by him. Father said, as the subject of love came up for discussion by the club, "when you are courtin' a girl and you find her rather offish, if she has any sentiment or soul, there is nothing like poetry to bring her to her senses. Why, when I was a courtin' my wife she was the most obstreperous girl you ever saw. If I approached the subject of love, she was up and off in a minute; at last she refused to see me at all. I was desperate, but all at once it came to me to try poetry on her. I prided myself in them days on bein' rather handy at writin' poetry. I wrote a good deal and should have tried my luck at takin' that up for a business, but mother allers said that a man who could write poetry didn't know enough to do anything else, and I guess she was right; yet it comes in handy sometimes. Wal, as I was sayin', I wrote her a long and tender epistle all in rhyme, the last verse promisin' her about everything on the earth if she would marry me, and it did the job; I allers thought that it was that verse that did it.

"There is nothin' so fetchin' as to promise 'em fine

clothes, a span of horses, nothin' to do but jest set 'round and love and eat and sleep and such like. But such a promise has its drawbacks later on, perhaps. I can't honestly say that I lived up to all that I promised her, so when she gets on her high heels sometimes, when the fire won't burn, the baby is cross, the milk bill and the ice bill are due, and nothin' to pay them with, and there ain't much in the house to eat, and a boarder has skipped without payin' his board, she will get out that piece of poetry—she allers kept it—and read the last verse to me, follerin' me all over the house and out to the barn if I try to escape, and readin' it at the top of her voice.

"Then she will ask me in the most aggravatin' way, why I don't go to work and help support the family, and I tell her she is onreasonable to expect me to work in my state of health, and then she will commence to cry—wal, I can tell you, boys, such things ain't comfortable. I never answer her back with anything sharp, as most men with less Christian fortitude than I have would do. I believe in bein' kind to your wife, even if she does do and say cuttin' things sometimes—and a woman can make it terribly oncomfortable for a man, especially if the man's her husband, and my wife has developed wonderful ability in that direction. But she makes me an awful good wife, and I can't see how I could have got along as well as I have without her. I have had a good livin', and that is about all we get in this world, anyway."

Father's narrative was listened to with rapt attention, and his philosophic deductions were received with every mark of approval by the club.

The night that Bige had finished his poetic appeal

and had received father's assurance that no girl with a heart or a sensible regard for her future could resist such a heart-to-heart letter, and all in poetry, too, he retired early and got a sound night's sleep for the first time in months.

The next forenoon was spent in deciding on the best way to fold the paper, and the kind of an envelope to use. He had but two kinds in stock, one plain and one with cupid stamped in the corner. This latter he instinctively saw was in harmony with the tender nature of the missive, and, after liberally sprinkling it with cologne that had been in stock so long that it had a strong terebinthinate odor, he carefully and lovingly sealed it. Then arose the terrifying problem of how it should be delivered. To put it in the post-office box was out of the question, as she might open it in the store, the very thought of which caused his teeth to chatter. He finally decided to send it by a messenger, which he found in the shape of a small boy. He gave the boy minute directions in all the details of carrying out so important a mission. The item of supreme importance was to place it in the young lady's hands, and on no account allow anyone to see or touch it.

As the boy passed around the corner of the store and disappeared up the street, a full realization of the momentous import of what he had done suddenly took possession of his timid soul. The die was cast, and he would have given all his possessions could he at that moment recall it; indeed, he did rush into the street with the desperate intention of calling the boy back, but his stuttering impediment, augmented by his agitation, prevented an articulate sound until the boy was well beyond hearing. He rushed back to his room and

took a double dose of his favorite heart corrector to stop the gyrations of that vital organ. But this did not abate his agitation, or the feeling that he had taken a leap into space, with no well defined idea of where he was to land, but with a vague feeling that a terrible abyss was opening that might at any moment engulf him.

His soul-crushing agitation was passing the limits of human endurance; he summoned to his aid all the nerve specifics and tonics at his command, but to no purpose. In his desperation it came to him that at various times when under unusual mental strain he had experienced a complete revulsion of feeling by liberal doses of a choice brand of old cider of a vintage dating back to a former generation. Now cider, if properly protected, with sufficient saccharine matter will, under proper conditions ,develop a large percentage of alcohol. This choice brand of Bige's had come from under expert hands, and contained about twenty per cent of alcohol.

His first libation produced such a happy effect in relieving his oppressive apprehensions that he soon took another, the combined effect not only completely dissipating his mental agony, but replacing it with an elevation of spirits which gave a glow to all things visible; so entrancing, that the temptation to make things glow still more became irresistible, and so he visited his room at frequent intervals, returning each time in a more rapturous state, which finally became so delightfully oppressive that he was irresistibly impelled to make a demonstration of some kind, so he startled the members of the club and the few neighbors who had dropped in, by an attempt to find an outlet to his pent-

up ecstasy in song. Bige suffered—or, rather, made others suffer—by the delusion common to perhaps the majority of man and womankind, that he could sing. His voice was a cross between the vocal depravity of a mule and the defiant challenge of a Shanghai rooster and, like all of his kind, he never lost an opportunity to harrow the souls of those of finer sensibilities.

He never attempted to sing, however, except under the inspiration of a church service, and there he jeopardized the salvation of many souls by his insistence of taking a leading and vociferous part in congregational singing, and at prayer meetings. He had no idea of harmony, and sang every hymn to the same tune, or, rather, the absence of any tune. His whole musical effort was an excruciating exemplification of the "Lost Chord." Various expedients were suggested and tried to mitigate the evil, but to no purpose; finally congregational singing had to be dispensed with at the regular church services, to the great relief of the people, but at the prayer meetings the only recourse was to pray for grace and to endure to the end.

So the startling effect may be imagined when Bige suddenly broke into "Hold the Fort." He sang two verses, but it did not seem to satisfactorily give expression to his increasing hilarity, so he startled his listeners still more with "wazza mazza wiz Sarshane shesall-right." Then he attempted to dance a double-shuffle, much to the delight of the club and the small boys, but to the horror of the more staid and the members of the church. Then he tried in the same "tune" to sing: "Oh Susanshane, my Shane—wazza mazza wiz Susanshan hic anyhow."

Just then he got his eye on Deacon Stebbins, who

had come in to get Bige's advice in regard to some repairs on the church, and he greeted him with "hic h'lo d'con Steb, how's your hic liver?" Without waiting to learn the condition of that important organ he attempted to turn a handspring and landed on his back, losing out his glass eye, which, fortunately rolled under the counter, where it was subsequently recovered unharmed. He got on to his feet again with some difficulty and attempted to sing "The Girl I Left Behind Me," ending with "Wazza mazza wiz Susanshane hic she's hic all right."

This repertoire, with some variations, continued for fully an hour to a constantly increasing and much surprised audience. His talk gradually became more maudlin and incoherent, and he staggered into his room, when a crash was heard. Father and Lem rushed in and there Bige lay on the floor, limp and helpless. They took him up, laid him on the bed and covered him up. Bige was drunk!

Father took charge of the store, opened and put up the mail, consisting of two letters and a small bundle of a weekly paper. Bige's condition was thought to be alarming at first, as such an exhibition had never before been witnessed by any inhabitant of Kiddersville. A doctor would have been sent for, but father knew as long as his heart beat regularly and strong there was no danger. Father faithfully remained with him all night, watching him constantly to see that there was no unfavorable change in his condition.

About eight o'clock in the morning Bige opened his eye and looked straight at father for several seconds, then he closed it and remained perfectly motionless for some time; then he opened it again and, with a long

breath, said: "Lem was right, want he?" "Right about what?" father asked. "Lem always said we should land here at last." "Where do you think we are?" asked father. With a tremulous voice and the perspiration starting all over his face, he answered: "Why, we are dead and in hell!"

Father never lost an opportunity to enforce a "moral lesson," so it came to him at once that this was a favorable opportunity by encouraging Bige's hallucination, so he says: "What makes you think so, Bige?" "Why," he said, "I never felt so when I was alive; I'm all on fire—my head is whirling around as though it was on a pivot, and every time it comes around I can see all kinds of colored fires, and look," he said, pointing to the other side of the room, his eye starting from its socket, and his whole being convulsed with the agony of fear, "there's the old devil himself!" and he covered his head with the bedclothes to shut out the horrible sight.

The object that so terrified him was a "life size" portrait of that strenuous individual, that had been sent out by a patent medicine firm as an object lesson to impress on the thoughtless and indifferent their near proximity to the realms of that torrid gentleman should they longer delay availing themselves of its life-saving compound. Bige had admired it as a work of art and had hung it in his room, regarding himself so far removed from any satanic association that the picture did not convey to his mind any inimical suggestion. Through the operation of that well established physiological law that a severe nervous or mental shock will obliterate from the memory, temporarily, all previous impressions, Bige had entirely forgotten the picture,

and so to his inflamed imagination it materialized into a startling reality.

Presently he uncovered his head, and in the agony of despair said in a plaintive voice: "I can't stand this for all eternity, I can't stand it at all!" and he would have rushed from the room with the probable impression that "the devil was after him" had he not been restrained by my father. His condition was pitiable. He was suffering all the acute agony to which one awakens from a debauch, and which probably simulates nearer than any other earthly experience the unalloyed woe of the damned, as pictured by good orthodoxy. But that I may not suffer the imputation of exaggeration, it may be prudent to limit the application of the simile to unmarried men.

When father was satisfied that Bige had been punished sufficiently, he attempted to reassure him by telling him not to worry, that he was sick and all those terrible things he imagined; he got some ice water and bathed his aching temples, and in various ways tried to soothe him and to restore his mind to its normal workings. In the afternoon mother went over and carried some hot gruel, which he ate with a relish. She bathed his hands and face, tidied up his room with a few of those magic touches by which a woman can transform the most forbidding environment into a paradise, presided over by an angel.

Bige was soon restored to a normal condition of mind, and when mother left he asked father what had happened and how long he had been sick. As gently as he could, father rehearsed some of the incidents of the previous day, and as his mind cleared the old terror gradually came back, emphasized by his weakened con-

dition. He recalled the poem he had sent to Miss Shedd, of the unbearable terror which had seized him, of resorting to large doses of old cider to bridge over the suspense while waiting for an answer. He realized that he had abandoned himself to the insidious influence of his favorite beverage, he recalled many things that had happened—of trying to turn a handspring, jumping over chairs and committing the great sin of trying to dance; also of inquiring after the condition of Deacon Stebbins' liver, and many other shocking and unbecoming antics for a pillar of the church. As the details of this great lapse in his life was gradually unfolded to his excited mind he groaned in agony of spirit. He thought he could never look the people of Kiddersville in the face again, and especially Parson Brownlow and the members of the church.

And then he thought of Miss Shedd. What would she think of him? But this thought did not terrify him so much as the thought that she might accept his proposal. In his excited condition things took shape in his mind with great rapidity. The responsibilities of married life with a rapidly increasing family, with all that it implied, passed before his mind with such kinetoscopic rapidity and distinctness as to utterly eclipse the delights of the married state which he had so fondly pictured. The prospective burden almost overwhelmed him. He could not bear to be left alone with his troubles, so begged father to remain with him until he got well or his destiny should be decided by a reply to his fateful proposal.

That evening a letter addressed to Abijah Joggins, Esq., was dropped in the letter-box from the outside. It was soon placed in Bige's hands; he stared at it with

a frightened look as though it were about to speak and pronounce his doom. He could not muster courage to open it, and so handed it to father with the request that he open it for him. Father did so and placed it in Bige's trembling hand. It was a dainty piece of stationery, in a dainty and distinct hand, cynically pharaphrazing a verse in Bige's poem, read as follows:

> Whether to choose between a fool and a fiddle,
> The subject of love is an easily solved riddle,
> For to be wed to fool, as most women are,
> Of all earth's woes is the hardest to bear.
> S. J. S.

Bige read and reread it several times, then he looked at the envelope and turned the paper over and over and looked at the back as though it might furnish a key to some hidden meaning.

Then he passed to father, saying: "I can't make head nor tail out of it; you read it and see if you can tell whether she means she will or she won't." Father read it, and handed it back with the assurance that, in his opinion, she had declined his offer. Bige's face brightened with a feeling of relief, and after a long pause, he said: "Well, I am glad she won't, but I wish she'd jus' said said no, it would have been just as easy for her and a darn sight easier for me." After another long pause, Bige said: "Do you think it was that poem that made her call me a fool?" This was a proposition worthy of father's mettle. He assumed his usual attitude in all great mental efforts, and in due time emerged with a characteristic and cautious reply, "I dunno." And thus ended Bige's first and last at-

tempt to bring a little sunshine into the gloom of his loneliness.

While Bige was convalescing, his mind in that quiescent state which comes from reaction from unusual mental or nervous tension, the whole town was in an uproar. Never had the town of Kiddersville been so stirred to its very depths as by this escapade of Bige's. Knots of men could be seen at any hour of the day talking it over. Lem was the center of an appreciative crowd at all times of day recounting just what had happened and impersonating Bige to good effect. Women could be seen with shawls over their heads, their countenances betraying the intense excitement under which they were laboring, flitting from house to house.

The widow Samanthy Hubbard dropped in to see Mrs. Stebbins, the deacon's wife, and opened the conversation with that usual female expletive: "Ain't it awful! To think that that good man and a pillar in our church should get drunk, and with such carryin's on. It is a shame and disgrace," and the good woman burst into tears. The deacon's wife, always calm and just, answered: "They needn't talk to me. I don't believe one word of it. I don't believe that Abijah ever did such a wicked thing. The deacon was there and saw the whole of it, and I had it right from him, and I know he was possessed. My sister Jane's first husband had a cousin whose son was taken just as Bige was, and carried on just as he did. Folks said he had been drinking. Finally they sent for old Doctor Stackwell and he said that he had the jam gims, or some long doctor's name that sounded like that. He said he was sure of it, for he had been took that way himself several times.

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But his folks and the church were not satisfied, so they appointed a church committee to set on him. This committee reported that he was possessed, and his dear, sainted mother prayed over him, and in a few days he came out of it. Every time he was possessed after that his mother did just the same thing, and the devil would soon leave him. And so I know Bige never drank any licker, but was just possessed, so there!"

Just then an aged spinster by the name of Hannah Henderson dropped in, and before she had got the door closed she almost screamed in a high, raspy voice: "I s'pose you've hern the news about Bige—ain't it awful! What is this world comin' tew; I've been all over town and have heer'd all about it; have seen Lem Gibson an' Jim Slack an' Sam Small an' Dick Graham an' Dan Gibson an' everybody else that was there, and they all say it was just awful the way he carried on, and they say it was whisky he got drunk on, and that they found a lot of empty bottles, but this don't surprise me; I've had my suspicions for a long time; I haint sed nothin', but I jest sed to myself, Bige is drinkin'; he has looked pale and absent-minded like I have been in there time and time ag'in and asked for a letter and ne would jest stare at me with that watery eye of hisen and when I have gone in and he did not hear me, I have heard him sayin' Susan Jane O Jane; what did that mean unless he was drinkin'? It's a shame; he ought to be sent to the Keeler Cure before he disgraces this town any more; but we ought to be thankful for one thing, and that is, he haint got a wife to suffer, and I hope no woman will ever be fool eonugh to marry him, and for my part, I don't see why anv woman wants to marry a man, for you can't never tell

what they will do next; it's sure to be some awful thing. I thank my stars that I have allers kept my inderpendence, although I have had chances enough, goodness knows, but I never saw a man yet that I would look at. Old Mr. Tewksbury came palaverin' around me a few months after his wife died, and I had fairly to kick him out—I told him to leave and to never darken his foot with my door ag'in. Well, it ain't for me to judge anybody, and I never talk about folks, but I have stayed too long and must be goin'. I must drop in and see Sister Springer, poor woman, she has been laid up with the rheumatiz so long and she never hears any news till its old, and I know it will cheer her up, poor thing. Well, I wish I could stay longer, but it is gettin' late and I have got a lot of other places to call, so good-bye." And she was out of sight with as little ceremony as she came.

Her tirade was delivered without the slightest pause or, as far as anyone could see, without taking breath, and as she closed the door behind her the two women were left in about the state of mind that would have resulted if a whirlwind had descended from a clear sky and picked up and carried off into space everything movable inside and outside of the house. As soon as they had recovered from their dazed condition, the deacon's wife ventured that pregnant observation: "Did you ever?" to which the widow assented with the equally pregnant corollary, "No, I never," and continued: "To hear Hannah run on about not wanting to get married when she has been after every man within twenty miles for the last forty years! Everybody knows that no sooner does a man lose his wife, but she is the first one there and purrs around the be-

reaved husband until she has fairly to be driven away. Her talk about turning old Mr. Tewksbury out! When his wife died she went there and said she had come to stay, and actually took charge of the house, and they say the old fool would have married her if his daughter had not come and turned her out. If she didn't want to be admired by the men why does she primp up so? Look at those curls! All her hair is false, her head is as bare as a billiard ball, as they say; and see the powders and paints and rouges she uses, and she dresses as young as a girl of twenty; and my sister Mary says that she knows that Hannah has used two dozen bottles of Professor Blosa's Bust Developer within a year;" and the two women laughed themselves into hysterics.

"And," continued the widow, "just look at her; she's as flat as a slab." "Yes," the other assented, "and flatter; why, when you look at her edgewise she's so thin that I can't see for the life of me when she has a pain how she knows whether it is the stomachache or the backache, and whether she ought to put a mustard poultice on her stomach or a porous plaster on her back," and they both went off again into a paroxysm of laughter. And so the two worthy women passed a most delightful afternoon in dissecting and doing up this derelict on the tempestuous sea of matrimony.

The next Sunday, when the people came into church, there were many furtive glances toward Bige's seat, to see if anyone was there, but his seat was vacant. It was evident that he was in everybody's mind, and every time the door opened the entire congregation turned square around to see if it was Bige, but he did not come. In his prayer the parson prayed for all those

who were detained at home by sickness or trouble, and if there was anyone whose empty seat told of a fall from grace, he hoped that he might be made to see the error of his ways and soon return to the narrow path. At this broad allusion many of the sisters so far relaxed their devotional attitude as to be able to look at each other and nod with approving significance.

That evening at the close of the prayer meeting the parson invited as many of the members as could find it convenient to meet at the parsonage, for the purpose of taking into consideration a matter of grave import to the church and community, the following Tuesday evening. This suggestive action of the parson immediately revived the flames at the points at which they might have commenced to grow a little dim, and the interest was prolific of new theories, discovery of new facts, exaggeration of old ones, and in the excited imaginations of many of the more active ones, poor, simple, inoffensive Bige had developed into a monster of repulsive proportions.

The day and hour and minute had arrived for the assembling of the inquisitorial members of the flock, and as the clock struck the half hour for 7:30 P. M., there strode into the unpretentious parlor of the pastor, thirty-one females, headed by Hannah Henderson, whose closely compressed lips and set eyes betrayed a fixed moral purpose, and her emphatic gait, a relentless determination to do her duty, whoever might go under. This portentious procession was followed by three demure men, Deacons Stebbins, Gallup and Lumpkins. During the day the neighbors had brought in chairs and arranged them so that all could be seated.

When the women had all been seated it was found

that every chair was occupied, so that the men were obliged to retreat into a dark closet adjoining, where they could not see or be seen, except Deacon Stebbins, who sat facing the door. When all were seated, the parson called the meeting to order, and said:

"My brothers and sisters—I need not tell you that we are met for the consideration of a matter which not only deeply concerns a member of our church, but one that is of deep moment to us all. For several days the peace, quiet and harmony of our community have been disturbed by various rumors touching a departure from the straight path of Christian rectitude of our brother, Abijah Joggins. Whatever foundation these rumors have in fact, there can be no doubt that they have been much distorted by exaggerations, and that many false statements have become current and accepted as truths. So we must approach the subject in a spirit of Christian charity with a determination to mete out exact justice, but all our acts must be tempered with mercy. I have asked you to assemble here for the purpose of getting your individual opinions, so that out of a consensus of these opinions we may arrive at a clearer view of the facts and see more clearly what our duty may be in the premises. I will ask you, as I call your names individually, to express your conviction in a few, plain words, keeping in mind the gravity of the matter and the necessity of using moderation in the expression of opinions. I will ask first for her opinion Sister Stebbins."

The deacon's wife arose, and in her sweet, kindly, motherly way, said: "It has been my opinion from the first, which I have had no reason to change, that it was simply a case of possession for which Brother

Abijah was not to blame, and that the church should take no action except to pray for him that he may not be afflicted with such a visitation again."

The parson then asked Miss Henderson for her opinion. Hannah was on her feet the moment her name was pronounced, and said: "I am sick of all this possession nonesense. I think I know all about it. I have spent days in getting the facts, and I know he was simply drunk, just drunk! Some says it was whisky, some says it was rum, some says it was gin, but it don't make no difference what it was, as I can see, he was drunk, and 'taint the fust time, neether, and I say he should be dropped from the church instanter."

These two extreme and diametrically opposed opinions had the effect on the assembly of an electric spark in contact with an explosive. In an instant every woman was on her feet, and the "discussion" immediately assumed a general character, which means that thirty-one women all talked at the same time; no one listened, but each one expressed her opinion with all the emphasis of uncompromising conviction and with that facility of expression which is the inherent possession of woman. As the melee increased in intensity the three deacons retreated further and further into the recesses of the closet until they were entirely hidden from sight. Out of the babel of sound might be distinguished such detached words and sentences as "drunk," "possessed," "he wan't," "it's awful," "whisky," "Keeler cure," "stand trial," "I've had my suspicions," "has been abused," "gone on all summer," "he didn't," "I know better,' "don't you dare," "I am as good as you are," and so on, finally degenerating into calling each other hard names and into personal abuse.

The row gradually subsided, as one by one they became exhausted, and they sank into their seats, with faces purple or pale, depending on the idiosyncrasy of the individual. Miss Henderson was the last to retire from the arena, and she gave the last parting shot: "You can't scare me." The "consensus of opinion" which the parson asked for seemed to be comprehended in the expressions, "he did," "he didn't," "you're another." During the most threatening part of the "riot" Deacon Stebbins cautiously closed the door and braced himself against it with the desperation born of great personal peril. One of Parson Brownlow's greatest virtues was that of a keen sense of humor. He sat through the whole of it with an amused expression lightening up his usually severe countenance. When complete order had been restored, the parson said, with a twinkle in his eye: "If the ladies have nothing more to say, I will ask the gentlemen for their opinions. Deacon Gallup, what is your opinion?"

Out of the depths of the closet came the timid answer, "haint got any." "Deacon Lumpkins, we would like your opinion." The deacon coughed several times, and in a quivering voice said: "My opinion is, we'd better go home." "Deacon Stebbins, will you kindly favor us with your opinion?" The deacon cautiously opened the door and commenced by timidly saying: "I think the subject has been threshed out by the ladies."

This remark of the deacon's, to one who did not know him, would have been taken as a piece of delicious irony, but it was not so intended, as the deacon's humorous side was a thing of congenital atrophy. He meant it as an honest, common figure of speech, but the ladies did not so take it, and instantly thirty-one pairs

of eyes were focused on the innocent deacon, all emitting portentous, livid fire. The deacon saw that he had said something he ought not to, and dodged back into the darkness. In response to a few encouraging words from the parson, he continued, without coming into sight: "I motion that a committee of seven be appointed to take up the whole matter, the committee to consist of four brothers and three sisters, the pastor to be a member and chairman of the committee." "I second the motion," came from Deacon Lumpkins. The pastor put the motion: "All who are in favor of this motion, say aye." The three deacons and Mrs. Stebbins said "aye." "All who oppose it, say no." Miss Henderson was the only one to vote in the negative, but she said "no" with a spitefulness that made the parson duck and so confused him that for the time he was sure the noes had it, but when he fully recovered, he ventured to say: "The motion seems to be carried in the affirmative, and I will appoint as members of that committee, Deacons Stebbins, Gallup and Lumpkins, and their respective wives, which, with myself will make the number. As this completes the business for which you were called together, I will dismiss you with the benediction. I will ask the members of the committee to remain for a few minutes that we may arrange for a date for the next meeting."

The ladies passed out, headed by Hannah. When well out of sight and hearing of the parsonage, Hannah said: "Did you ever in all your life hear anything like that! For the parson to appoint such a committee, every one of them Bige's friends. Of course, he will be acquitted, no matter what he has done! It's a sin and an insult to the church." This was a bomb that

let loose a storm of epithets that made the very air quiver, and the like of which had never been known in the quiet town of Kiddersville since the lightning struck Deacon Lumpkins' pigpen and set it on fire, when the entire population, men, women and children turned out and frantically yelled fire and did nothing else until the house and its contents of a sow and a litter of pigs were all consumed. The people along the street, all of whom were in bed and soundly sleeping—it was nearly nine o'clock—were startled from their sleep; some got up to examine the fastening to their doors; others cautiously peeped out from behind the curtains to ascertain, if possible, the cause of the great and unwonted commotion. Their worst fears were quieted as the procession came into view, as all knew of the meeting, and many had predicted a "hot time," but no one had foreseen this interesting public exhibition.

The intensity of the demonstration decreased and became less threatening as the respective combatants reached their homes and reluctantly dropped out. Samanthy Hubbard and Hannah were the last of the depleted ranks, and as the widow's house was reached, Hannah fired the last gun, by saying: "If Bige is acqu'itted and taken back into the church after his disgraceful carryns-on, I will never step my foot into that church again, and they won't get any more of my money to help support it, either, so now." Hannah's yearly contribution toward the support of the gospel had been $1.75 and 25 cents extra in the fall toward buying the parson a pig.

As a result of the deliberations of the committee, a meeting was arranged for the following Friday evening. Bige and such witnesses as the parson might designate

to be summoned, were to appear at the meeting. Deacon Lumpkins was commissioned to notify Bige of the action of the committee and to act accordingly. The next morning the deacon waited on Bige, and as gently as possible discharged his delicate duty. Bige was so frightened that his glass eye fairly changed color. It seemed to him that this was the culmination of all his woes, and for a moment the desperate remedy of suicide took possession of him, but the impression he received of the infernal regions during his incipient delirium was still fresh in his memory, so that this alternative was no sooner conceived than abandoned. As soon as he could pull himself together and get his mind back to its normal function he immediately sought father's counsel and advice.

Father asked for time to consider it, which meant an appeal to mother, as he always did in matters requiring any mental effort or decisive action. Mother's advice was for Bige to go before the committee, confess his fault, explain the exciting cause that led up to it, and to then throw himself on the mercy of the "court." That evening father reported to Bige that he had spent all the afternoon in the retirement of his "study" in looking at the matter from the standpoint of the church, the community and his own best interest, and as a result of his exhaustive thought he had concluded that he should go before the committee, confess his fault, explain the causes that led up to it and appeal to the court for leniency.

Bige said that it all seemed feasible except the part that he explain the cause. That he could not do, and would rather let it go by dafault, and take the consequences. Father then asked for more time to see if

there might not be some other way out of the difficulty. He reported to mother Bige's determination. Mother said that was not a matter of vital importance. He could say that at the time he was laboring under great mental strain and was hardly responsible for what he might have done. Father again reported his modified decision. This seemed reasonable to Bige and he consented to obey the summons of the committee, if father would accompany him as his counsel and advocate, which father was only too glad to do.

All the members of the committee were in their places promptly at the time designated, and a few minutes later Bige with his "counsel" entered. The chairman at once called the meeting to order, and after a short prayer, briefly stated the case as he understood it, gathered, as he confessed, from unsupported rumors. He then asked Bige to state the matter plainly and truthfully and as fully as he could recall. Bige arose, and as soon as he commenced to speak his embarrassment left him, and he explained with much detail what had happened. He pleaded in defense insupportable mental excitement and the disastrous consequences as due largely to an untested brand of old cider. He dwelt, with much feeling and good effect on the physical and mental suffering that had resulted from the unfortunate affair, and he summed up by asserting with great emphasis his belief that he had atoned fully by his suffering, for not only that sin but for the sins that he had ever committed, yet he did not ask for leniency, and would cheerfully submit to whatever punishment the committee might in justice see fit to impose.

After Bige had taken his seat, father took the floor and briefly reviewed the incidents as Bige had related

them, saying that he was cognizant of the cause that had precipitated this unusual disturbance in the even tenor of his life, that the cause had disappeared, and such being the case such a lapse from grace could never occur again. He was willing to submit the case to the tribunal, knowing that it would be considered prayerfully, in a spirit of forgiveness, giving the accused the benefit of all doubts, keeping in view the exciting cause, that of the great burden under which he was laboring and the deceptive quality of the very old and untested stock of cider to which he had resorted. Father's presentation of the case was masterly, and his peroration most eloquent, and had wonderful effect in reviving Bige's spirits and softening any hardness that might have been in the hearts of any of the committee.

The chairman said that he thought that the committee had got all the essential facts and he did not deem it necessary to examine any more witnesses; that they would consider the evidence in all its bearings and be ready to report at the close of the evening service the following Sunday, and he should expect that all parties interested would be present on that occasion. The parson impressed on all present the fact of the secret nature of the hearing, and that it would be a gross violation of good faith to reveal in the slightest degree what had transpired at the investigation. All the community need to know, or should know, would be made public when the time came to read the report of the committee. He enjoined secrecy with greater emphasis perhaps than he otherwise would, had there been no female members of the committee. The members went to their respective homes, no doubt impressed with the sacredness of the secrecy as imposed by the

pastor. The next morning, various curious neighbors dropped in to see the three female members of the committee. To each one the ladies said just the same thing, viz:

"The meeting was secret, and we are not allowed to tell you anything that was done, but if you will promise on your life that you will never tell, I will tell you just all about it."

The promise being made without hesitation, the proceedings in every detail were fully discussed. Each one of these ladies who had so solemnly promised "never to tell" could not rest until she had found a particular friend and surprised her with the confidential knowledge she was in possession of, and on the solemn promise that she "would never tell," rehearsed the story with additions only limited by each individual's power of imagination, and so an endless chain was put in motion, and by dinner time every one in town not only knew just what did take place at the meeting, but the accretions had so distorted the original story that it seemed tame and commonplace in comparison.

Dear, simple, old Parson Brownlow was one of those saints on earth whose daily life exemplified all the cardinal virtues, and the greatest of these was charity. He could not find it in his great, generous, loving heart to bring sorrow into the life of anyone. He appreciated the weakness of frail human nature, and he knew —no matter if Bige had transgressed—it was not from the heart, but some untoward circumstances; so in writing his report it was no surprise that it was a mixture of fantastic logic, unconscious incongruities and fatherly forbearance.

At the prayer meeting on the following Sunday the house was packed, and at the close all who were not members in good standing, by request of the pastor, reluctantly withdrew. Those who remained were asked to take seats in front of the pulpit. When quiet was restored the parson drew from his pocket a formidable-looking document, carefully spread it out on the reading desk, deliberately wiped his spectacles, cleared his throat, in the meantime letting his eyes wander over the audience as if to prepare it for what was to come. Then he let his eyes rest for some moments on the formidable document, again cleared his throat, and again took a survey of the waiting listeners.

Every eye was upon him, and many did not dare to look at the document, knowing that it contained that which was of momentous import to one of their number. Had it been a sealed verdict of a murder trial it could not have impressed the waiting audience with a greater feeling of dread and awe. These impressive preliminaries did not occupy but a few moments, but to many of the most anxious it seemed hours. At last the parson opened his mouth to speak, when Hannah Henderson gave a little hysterical scream, and the parson closed his mouth. Hannah was wrought up to such a nervous pitch that she had become hysterical, and when the parson was about to speak it seemed to her that a great disaster was about to be precipitated, and so the "pop" safety-valve flew open. The parson looked severely at her, and the diversion seemed to be a temporary relief to the audience. When quiet was again restored, without further deliberation, but with measured solemnity, he proceeded to read his report, of which the following is a verbatim copy:

Kiddersville, Me., Sept. 23, 18——.

Brothers and Sisters in the Lord:—

The committee appointed by you to investigate an alleged misdemeanor on the part of one of our number, a young man of blameless life and great piety, has performed that duty and now submit the following report:

Our brother, Abijah Joggins, against whom the charge was made, voluntarily came before your committee and made a full confession, or rather, perhaps I had better say, an explanation of the events under investigation, all of which was confirmed by Brother Dobson. He admitted that on the occasion in question he unfortunately became afflicted with a jag. I use this modern synonym advisedly, as it seems less harsh than the biblical phrase, drunk. It is more flexible, with a more restricted interpretation. The definition of jag is a small load, so that its application in this case rightly minimizes our brother's condition on the occasion in question. Now it was brought out in the evidence that said jag was not induced by rum, gin, brandy, whisky, high balls or Manhattan cocktails, all concoctions of the devil. If it had been, then the case would stand in a very different light from what it now does. It was clearly shown that the agent used was nothing but a very choice brand of very old cider. I am unable to find in Scripture that a jag is wrong per se, the sin being in the means used. Cider is not a concoction of man: his agency being simply to press the juice out of the apples, place it in bottles, barrels or half-barrels, and store it in a favorable place. What takes place in the cider as it stands is in accordance with the laws devised by the Creator, and

we have it from the good Book that when he had created a thing He looked upon it and called it good, no matter in what condition man may find it. Moreover, that most righteous of all our laws enacted by wise and godly men—the Maine prohibitory law—recognizing the legitimate nature of cider as well as the rights and interests of our apple-raising farmers, has wisely exempted it from the list of those devil-inspired concoctions which the good people of our State are forever forbidden to touch or look upon. So it must of necessity follow, that a beverage so sanctioned can do no wrong, so to speak, and to condemn it would be absurd, if not impious. We should not be understood as advising that very old cider be indulged in to the extent of producing unbecoming exhilaration. All good things may be unwisely used, although exceptions must be made in those cases of unusual mental and bodily stress, as was evidently the case in the subject now under consideration. Your committee are therefore happy to report that they find no cause for condemning Brother Joggins, as guilty of any premeditated or intentional offense against society, the church or religion, in which finding your committee are unanimous.

As the report closed a long breath of relief was audible, and as the meeting was dismissed Bige was at once surrounded by the sisters who congratulated him on his vindication. Hannah Henderson was the first one to reach him and, holding his hand with increasing pressure, she assured him that she had stood up for him through the whole of it; that she knew he had done nothing wrong, and after she had spoken her mind around over the town, no one dared to accuse him in

her presence, and with a parting wring of the hand she assured him that when he should be in need of a friend he could always depend on her.

Bige went home with a spiritual exaltation that he had never felt before and his prayer that evening was one of subdued and genuine thankfulness.

One evening late in December an event occurred which disturbed the monotonous routine of Kiddersville life. When the stagecoach arrived it contained a passenger! As Bige's store was the only public place in town, the entire cargo brought by the stage, animate and inanimate, was dumped at that emporium. On the evening recorded in this history, the club had assembled in full force, also a representative of every family in town, waiting for the weekly mail. When the passenger entered carrying one end of a small trunk, all conversation ceased, and every eye was directed toward the stranger. The night being very cold, he was so completely submerged in his wraps, that all that could be distinguished at first, was a moving object, suggestive of a rummage sale. The densely packed circle around the stove readily gave way for the advancing and shivering figure. Under the influence of the heat he soon commenced to unwind some of his wrappings. First he took from around his neck what seemed to be a woman's shawl, of ancient pattern, and showing signs of long and faithful service; then from over his shoulders another shawl that might have been the predecessor of the one just mentioned.

This denuding process exposed a "buffalo" coat, showing evidence of having experienced the vicissitudes of all things earthly, having been denuded of nearly all of its hair, and where the substance had entirely disap-

peared, it had been replaced with sheepskin, with the wool on it, giving it a variegated and picturesque appearance. On his head he wore a hat of the nat. ord. plug, and of a style reaching back into antiquity, and, like its confrere, the coat, it, too, had shed most of its hair, presenting a hopeless, dejected, one-sided lop, that excited no other feeling in the beholder than that of compassion. Whether his trousers reached the ground was a matter of conjecture, as they were comfortably tucked inside of the legs of a pair of cowhide boots. which arrangement was necessary, because the circumference of the boot legs was much greater than that of the bottom of the trousers.

As he gradually thawed out he unbuttoned his coat, relieved his ears of the support of the hat, exposing a countenance quite in harmony with his variegated costume. His hair was quite massive, black streaked with gray, extending well down his long neck, cut square around, in a style worn by old ladies of a former generation, and occasionally to this day. His eyes were small, set well back in his head, but had a restless brilliancy which indicated a character of more than ordinary interest. His nose was of the elongated dumb-bell type, and from the effects of the cold, or other causes, it glowed with a sunset brilliancy. His face was cleanly shaven well down under the chin until encountered by a growth of coarse beard, extending from ear to ear, giving him somewhat the appearance of not being many generations removed from our Simian ancestors.

The gaze of some of the bystanders had been diverted from the proprietor to that of his property—that is to say, his trunk. This was of very ancient pat-

tern, long and narrow with a circular top, covered with hog-skin with the hair side out, although it had become quite bald. It was liberally ornamented with brass-headed nails, culminating in the initials "J. D."

During the period which this description covers, not a word had been spoken and not an eye had been diverted from the stranger and his trunk; even Bige stopped several times in his labor of assorting the mail to join the others in an attempt to penetrate the intentions and business of the mysterious stranger. He did not seem to show any embarrassment, but surveyed the surroundings with deliberate calculation. Presently he spoke, and the sound of his voice came out of the stillness so unexpectedly that everyone jumped. He was obliged to repeat his question before anyone was sufficiently recovered to comprehend what he desired. He wished to know if there was any place in the village where he could be entertained for a few days. All eyes were at once turned to father for an answer; he promptly came forward and said that his wife took boarders in the summer, and he had no doubt but that she could entertain him.

Without further deliberation he took hold of one end of the trunk and asked father to take the other, with the caution that it be handled very carefully, as it contained valuable and breakable articles. No sooner was the door closed than the audience gave vent to its burning curiosity, and speculation as to who he was, and what his intentions might be, became very active. Some thought he was an escaped convict, others that he was from some insane asylum, others that he had some diabolical intentions, which were to be carried out with an infernal machine concealed in the trunk; and this the-

ory was given some color by the caution that he gave father in regard to handling it. Many other guesses were made, all suggesting, however, incendiary intentions. This impression became so strong that many of the timid were afraid to go home alone, although this fear of impending evil was somewhat modified by Lem's opinion, who when appealed to, said: "He don't look to me like a man who has come here to murder, burn buildin's, kidnap children or break into houses. He looks to me like one of them colt porters."

All wanted to know what that meant. Lem said it was a man who peddled Bibles. Someone asked why he was called a colt porter. Lem never admitted his inability to answer any and all questions satisfactorily, so after hemming several times, he said "it was because that was the man's name who first started the business—Mr. Colt Porter—and ever since anyone who went into that business was given the same name." This explanation fully satisfied the seekers after knowledge. Lem's view seemed a reasonable explanation, which served in a measure to calm the apprehensions of impending danger, but did not diminish the curiosity, and as each member of the various families represented arrived home and told the news, the unwonted occurrence at once became the subject of discussion and speculation.

When father arrived home and ushered his "find" into the sitting-room, mother was both surprised and annoyed. Father explained to her in a few words that the gentleman wanted board for a few days, and he thought they had better accommodate him. After divesting himself of his shawls and "buffalo," he seated himself by the stove and applied himself with much

vigor to rubbing and limbering up his joints. Mother asked him if he would like supper, to which he answered yes, with an unction which plainly indicated that that subject was at that moment occupying his mind to the exclusion of all things else. She asked what he would like, to which he answered that "a good beefsteak with fixin's" would suit him. Mother said that beefsteak was a luxury that her house did not afford.

Then he said some "warm slap jacks" would do. Mother was systematic in her business, so she got out her "register" and asked him to register his name. He seated himself at the desk and entered upon a task which seemed to be an unusual and excruciating effort. He first ran out his tongue, then very slowly commenced the formation of the letters, his tongue moving in unison with the motions of the pen, and turning his head at various angles following its upward and downward strokes. The ordeal finally ended, the effort causing the perspiration to stand in drops all over his face. Father suggested that he had better go to his room while supper was being prepared, and each one taking one end of the trunk proceeded upstairs.

As soon as he was out of sight we all gathered around the book to see what his name was, and were startled and much impressed by reading, REV. JEDEDIAH DYER. When father came down, mother asked him why he had brought that man to the house; she said she did not like the looks of him from the first, and now that he called himself a Reverend, she knew he was a scamp. But father said it was business, and they would charge him a good, round sum, but mother said he did not look as though he was overburdened with money, and more

than likely he was a dead-beat. Father said: "We will wait and see what he is up to; he may be like a singed cat."

In due time the Rev. Jedediah came down somewhat improved in his personal appearance. Mother had cooked a large plate of griddle cakes which were placed before him at the table, and without stopping to say grace, he "waded in," and the way those cakes disappeared was enough to cause consternation in any household where food of any kind was none too plentiful. As he neared the bottom of the pile mother asked him if she should cook some more. He said she had better. She prepared another supply equal in size to the first, which disappeared with as little delay. Mother did not pretend to notice that the last instalment had been exhausted, and he "hemmed" several times, but she persistently ignored the insinuation, and he finally reluctantly left the table—but left nothing else.

During this gastronomic cyclone he did not look up, and the only interruption in the regularity of the play of his knife and fork was to adjust his false teeth, which were constantly getting out of gear. Apparently they were not made for him, but were perhaps a family heirloom, or had been bought at a bargain counter. After this satisfying performance he seated himself by the stove, wound one leg around the other, and turning to father he commenced the conversation by saying: "Lemme me, what might I call your name?" "Dobson," father answered. "Well, Mr. Dobson, what's the spiritual condition of your town in general?" Father answered with his usual caution: "Oh, so and so." This illuminating answer did not seem to convey to his mind the exact information that he desired, so to

bring out a more comprehensive answer he proceeded to say that he was an "Evangelist," that he had been told that Kiddersville had not been blest with a revival of religion for many years, that it was very much needed, and the Lord had directed him to undertake the work.

This revelation was of so startling a nature and involved so much that father was obliged to readjust his entire mental equipment before he could answer. When he had got the machine started on this uncertain tangent, he explained in a tone of protest that the people of this town were all committed to the doctrine of "election"—that those who were to be saved would be, and all the rest would be damned, so that a "revival," as he called it, could not change matters any, was wholly unnecessary, would be an expense, would unsettle people's belief, and "raise Ned generally," and that he knew the whole church "would be dead set against any such stirring up of things." This uncompromising opposition had the effect to fire up the Rev. Jedediah, who answered with much warmth that if the people of that town believed such "dumd nonsense," so much more the need of a revival, and he knew the good Lord knew what he was doing when he directed him to so benighted a community, and that he should stay and preach "salvation by repentance," until all "such ideas were knocked out of them," besides he said it was not only his mission to save souls, but to cure the body also. He said: "I have got a medicine that is the wonder of this age. It will cure any disease, no matter what, and your people need my medicine as much as they do a revival of religion, and probably more"—a statement, the humor of which passed harmlessly over father's

head. The Rev. Jedediah said "that to cure the body is the first step to curing the soul, and the Lord has always smiled on my efforts to do both. Anyone who buys a box of Dyer's Salvation Pills will always bless the day that the Lord sent me to this town."

At the mention of medicine, father's antagonism at once gave place to that of enthusiastic interest. He commenced to call him "Brother Dyer." He had never seen a real "discoverer" of any of the medical wonders before, and he recognized at once the "finger of Providence" in the remarkable presence with which his house was now honored. He wanted to know all about the medicine, but the Rev. Jedediah put him off with the plea that it was getting late, that it was a long story, and that if he would attend his first revival meeting he would get a full history of the wonderful and providential discovery. He then intimated that he was tired and would like to retire, but before doing so would like to pray with the family. Father gave a glad assent, and they were soon in the proper attitude. The prayer was a masterly effort. He prayed for the entire community, and especially for the sick, and thanked the Lord that relief was in sight for all who would avail themselves of the means now at hand.

When he had finished father started in with a prayer that he had evolved with much study and practice, and one which he reserved for special occasions. Father's acknowledged supremacy in prayer as a fine art had caused him to regard any pretentious effort along that line on the part of anyone as an impertinence and a challenge. So under the stimulus of resentment he really beat his record on this occasion. After he had got thoroughly wound up to the work, the Rev. Jede-

diah relaxed his devotional attitude, raising his head so that he could watch father's every motion and the expression of bliss with which his countenance was all aglow. When the prayer was finished and they had risen to their feet, the Rev. Jedediah extended his hand and said: "Brother Dobson, shake! I have all along prided myself on being some at prayer, but you have knocked me silly."

After the Rev. Jedediah had retired, mother said: "I do not like the looks of that man. I am sure he is a hypocrite and a beat." Father asked how she could say that "of a man who can pray as he did—nearly as well as I can myself—he must be a good man, besides he has discovered a wonderful medicine, and it is an honor to have him in the house." Mother protested that he did not look as if he had much money, and even if he had and could pay the regular price for board, if his supper was a sample of his appetite the price would not pay for the raw material. Anyway, she hoped he would leave the next morning. We sat some time talking after our guest had retired, when all at once mother said: "What's that noise?"

We all listened and were startled by a combination of sounds of an unusual and terrifying character. Father thought the cow had got a potato stuck in her throat (he had given her potatoes for supper). Mother thought that Dobbin, the horse, had got cast and was choking to death, and urged father to unusual activity in getting his lantern and hat to go to the barn. As he opened the door to the stairway leading up to the upper floor, where he kept his hat, the mystery was at once explained. The Rev. Jedediah had left the cares of a troubled world behind, and had entered that

world of phantoms called sleep, and was vigorously announcing the fact by a series of fog-horn blasts which might have had great potential value as a danger signal —that is to say, he was snoring.!

For some time we listened with great enjoyment to this exhibition of human endurance, but the unvarying rhythm became monotonous after a time, and then exasperating, as it was useless to retire, sleep being out of the question. So we impatiently waited, hoping that he would turn over, or that a "frog would get into his throat," so that at least there would be some variety. But all things have an end. About half past one there came a cataclysm, characterized by a series of whoops, explosive gurgitations culminating in a riot of convulsive spasms; then we heard him turn over and all was quiet. We learned afterwards that the sudden and violent interruption to this nocturnal diversion was caused by his misfit teeth dropping down and the consequent involuntary muscular effort to prevent them from going down his throat.

The next morning he was promptly at the breakfast table with an appetite which fully realized mother's worst apprehensions. After breakfast he and father had another tilt at prayer. After friendly relations were again restored, he said his first move always was to visit the local clergymen to ask their cooperation and to secure the use of a church, and asked father to introduce him to the pastor of his church. Father said he thought it would be useless to do so, but he would go with him, as it would do no harm to make the attempt. Arriving at the parsonage, father introduced to parson Brownlow "The Rev. Jedediah Dyer," with a few explanatory words. The Rev. Jedediah entered at once on the business in hand, by saying:

"The Lord has directed me to come among your people for the purpose of reviving an interest in religion. of which I am informed your people are seriously in need of, and I have come to ask your cooperation and the use of your church for this glorious work." The appearance of the man, his assurance, coupled with the implied reflection of the moral and religious condition of the community at once aroused the ire and resentment of the good man, and he made no attempt to disguise his wrath. With his voice trembling with suppressed anger and disgust, he said: "The sanctuary in this town has never been profaned by any such ungodlyly and vulgar performance, and it never will be as long as I have any influence, and your conviction that you have been divinely called to undertake the job, is more likely to come from a disturbed liver than from the Lord—Good-day, sir!"

The Rev. Jedediah assumed all the dignity that he was capable of and caustically replied: "If you are a sample of the godly portion of this community, I am sure the Lord has sent me none too soon to bring a little saving grace within reach of your people—Good morning." And he opened the door and disappeared, leaving father with the now infuriated parson.

It is an undoubted fact that every man is endowed with a dual nature. This may not often become apparent, and a man may pass through life wholly unconscious of the fact that he is living in close contact with a personality that is wholly a stranger to him, the existence of which becomes known only through some sudden and rude shock. This psychological moment had arrived in the experience of good Parson Brownlow. The mortal insult had fully aroused the latent

and hitherto unknown "Mr. Hyde." He stormed and stamped up and down the room, pouring his vials of wrath on the defenseless head of father, demanding why he had brought that d——d rascal to insult him, and using various other epithets most shocking for a Christian minister, although in justice it should be admitted that the nature of the provocation demanded the use of the most rugged language, as ordinary everyday polite expression becomes impotent and absurd in any attempt to convey adequate and proper resentment to an insult of such aggravated proportions.

The Rev. Jedediah affected to resent the rebuff he had received at the hands of the parson, yet it was what he had expected and most desired. Give any business enterprise, no matter how questionable or disreputable a religious annex with a persecution twist, and with the most ordinary persistence and intelligent direction its success is assured. This philosophical fact the Rev. Jedediah had demonstrated on many occasions in his varied experience.

He next called on the "school board," which consisted of one man, Isaac Slackup by name, although his familiar cognomen was "Slack Ike." He had constituted the "board" from time immemorial, and his maiden daughter had been the teacher during the same time. He introduced himself to Isaac, explained his mission, and dwelt at great length on the persecution with which his efforts were being met, and requested the use of the schoolhouse for his proposed regeneration of the community. As the "board" was regarded as outside of the pale and having little sympathy with the "elect," he readily granted the request. He then returned to the house, got a bundle of small posters, and proceeded to tack them up in conspicuous places.

The poster read as follows:

"The Rev. Jedediah Dyer, Gospel Worker, Temperance Reformer and Physician, will hold a Gospel Meeting in the Schoolhouse this evening. All are invited—especially the sinners and sick. It will not hurt the well ones—nor the saints."

This last clause was an after-thought, written in with pencil, evidently inspired by his experience with the parson.

It may well be imagined that this announcement in a very short time became the talk of the town, and before night the meeting was better advertised than a circus would have been with all its spectacular announcements.

When the hour arrived the house was packed, and all the available standing room taken. As the stranger took his place on the small platform before the audience, his ungainly figure and grotesque dress caused the boys and girls to "snicker," and the older ones to suggestively nudge each other. He rose, and in a well modulated voice, said: "We will open this meeting by singing the old and familiar hymn, 'Just As I am Without One Plea,' and I will ask all who can sing, and especially the ladies, to join me."

Taking a tuning-fork from his pocket, he produced a vibration by drawing it between his teeth, and running up and down the scale several times, he finally "hit it," and started in. The performance was so unique, and all present having come from curiosity, no one thought of taking a part, so he sang the whole five verses alone, and although his voice broke several times and he lost the key, yet the performance had something of impressiveness in it.

Without further preliminaries he started in on his "sermon." He was evidently smarting from the rebuff he had received in the morning, for his effort was largely directed against the doctrine of "election." As near as I can recall, he said in part:

"My fellow sinners, the good Lord has sent me here among you to show you the error of your ways and to call you to repentance. I understand you folks have got the fool idea that some will be saved anyhow and some will be lost anyhow. Now I want to tell you right here, all of you who have got such notions into your heads, that you have been fooled—it's all nonsense. The Bible plainly says that there is only one way to salvation, and that is to repent of your sins. This is so plain that I cannot see how you can believe such stuff. If you stick to such a fool belief, I can tell you that some of you will be mightily surprised some day, when the great Judge will say to some who are not expecting it, 'Come right in,' and to others who are way up in your church, and are feeling so good to think that they are of the elect, as they call it, the Judge will say, 'Get out, there is no room for you here.' I have come among you to tell you how you may be saved, and it is so easy that all should go to glory rejoicing. All you have to do when I say the word is to come forward to the front seat, repent of your sins and be prayed for, and you are saved; and before I get through I shall ask all who want to be saved to come forward and let me save you."

As he warmed up to his subject he was greatly handicapped by his false teeth getting out of place. He finally took them out, retaining them in his left hand, with which he made his gestures, and in the perform-

ance of this act he made a motion as though hitting a punching-bag. The teeth were held in his hand in such a way that every jab gave a grewsome emphasis to his words, and to add to the startling effect the loss of his teeth changed his voice and articulation from a high scraping falsetto to disjointed saxhorn explosions, and the incongruous transformation was heightened by a complete change of facial expression. His cheeks bagged and his upper lip seemed to be abnormally elongated. It was at this juncture that he seemed to be entering on his peroration, for he said:

"Hell is opening right under you, and you'll be tumbling into it before you know what has happened, unless you repent here and now. It's repentance that will save you and nothing else, and now's your chance. I will not say that it is the only chance, for I shall hold more meetings, but it may be your last chance, for perhaps tonight, after you go home, it may be when you are taking your boots off, or letting the cat out, or getting the kindling, or just getting into bed, or after you have gone to sleep, that the Lord will call you before the judgment seat, and if you have not repented, where are you? Gone to hell! Oh, sinners, don't take no chances, don't fool yourselves into thinking that you will be saved if you don't repent. It's unreasonable, you can't expect it. The greatest sinner among you can escape hell here and now. The Lord has sent me to offer you this chance, and if you don't take it you'll miss it, but don't blame me, and now all who would like to be saved right on the spot, without money and without price, please rise."

Lem Gibson had been a sympathetic and attentive listener. While he had the reputation of being a very

great sinner, yet he had by nature deep religious feelings, and the speaker's powerful appeal took him out of himself into a sub-normal consciousness, so when "all who wanted to be saved" were asked to rise, by a resistless emotional impulse Lem responded without the least hesitation. Whether the appeal had failed to make an impression on anyone else, or whether so unexpected an event as Lem's conversion diverted attention, cannot be said, but at any rate no one else expressed a desire for the proffered salvation. But this small beginning was evidently a source of encouragement to the speaker, as he was inspired to say: "Glory to God that one sinner is saved."

After a waiting a moment, he added: "Is there only one in this house who wants to be saved tonight?" This remark brought Lem back to earth; glancing around and seeing that he was standing entirely alone, and all eyes staring at him, his quick intuition told him that he had irretrievably compromised his reputation as dean of the village loafers unless he then and there took heroic measures to neutralize the effect of his unpremeditated and unfortunate predicament; so after deliberately surveying the audience, in clear and unmistakable tones, he made the characteristic observation: "Well, I guess I've made a damn fool of myself," and sat down—and Lem was himself again.

The effect on the audience was as varied as individual mental habit. Some were shocked, some smiled, and the more thoughtless laughed outright. The Rev. Jedediah was paralyzed; he opened his mouth several times to speak, but no sound came forth; he sat down, stared at the space occupied by Lem while standing, then at the audience, and tried again to speak, but both

ideas and the power of speech were lacking; then he replaced his teeth, and in the effort to get the "suction" to keep them in place he executed a series of facial gymnastics which resembled an effort to swallow a live crab. This, added to the already mirthful situation, served to produce a general "titter" all over the house, which seem to embarrass him still more, but he finally regained his feet and managed to say, "tomorrow, at this place and at the same time, I shall give a lecture on the evils of intemperance. All come and bring your intemperate neighbors, if you have any. You are dismissed."

When we arrived at the house, the Rev. Jedediah went directly to his room, without even saying goodnight. In a short time we heard a sound resembling that which is produced when the cork is blown out of a yeast bottle, then we heard a gurgling sound. This caused mother to say: "That man is a hypocritical old scoundrel. I knew by the size and color of his nose, the first time I saw him, that he drank, and this morning I found a bottle behind the bed labeled 'old rye.' His trunk was unlocked and I looked into it; it contained some circulars, a pair of dirty stockings, several boxes of pills and ten bottles of 'old rye.' I only wish he would leave."

Then we heard another gurgling sound. Pretty soon he began to sing "Jesus Loves Me;" after he had finished, another gurgle, and then he broke into "When Johnny Comes Marching Home." Then some more gurgling, and he sang "The Girl I Left Behind Me." Then after one or more gurgles we heard him tumble into bed. There was soon audible evidence that the Rev. Jedediah Dyer, Evangelist, Temperance Worker and Physician, slept.

Our boarder did not come down to breakfast the next morning until about half past ten. His nose had developed a deeper shade of crimson and his eyes were bloodshot. He explained that he had overslept as a result of his previous hard day's work. He ate very sparingly, for which he apologized. Mother said, "don't mention it." After breakfast father opened the conversation by referring to the notice of a temperance meeting that he had given the night before, and said that he did not think a meeting of that character at all necessary or wise for the reason that there were no intemperate people in the town, and he did not believe there was, or ever had been, a drop of liquor in the place, except what outsiders might have brought for their own use. The Rev. Jedediah asked if some of the people did not drink cider. Father said they did. The temperance apostle could see no difference; the effect of any liquor he said depends wholly on the alcohol it contains, and cider if sufficiently aged often contains half as much alcohol as whiskey, and there is no difference in the effect; it is as bad and wicked to use one as the other, and he believed there was as much drunkenness in the State of Maine caused by the universal practice of drinking cider as in other States where liquor was freely sold.

Warming up to the subject, he went on to say that the reason cider was made an exception in the prohibitory lists of alcoholic beverages was to get the farmer to vote for prohibition. It was a great piece of sharp politics—it not only left the farmers and others all the booze they wanted, but made apple raising for cider profitable, and drunkenness respectable, if only it came through the use of cider. Father said he did not know

or care anything about that part of it, but what he did know was, that if he attempted to preach against the use of cider in Kiddersville, the people would not stand for it, and the consequences to him personally might, and probably would, be of an unpleasant nature. The Rev. Jedediah did not make any reply to this convincing argument, but it was evident he was deeply impressed.

The novel and exciting scenes of the "revival" meeting of the previous night had been the subject of conversation during the day, and when the hour for the "temperance lecture" had arrived the house was packed. The Rev. Jedediah prayed long and forcibly in the opening and then said: "The musical part of the exercises will be omitted." Then he commenced his lecture, which was substantially as follows:

"My brethren and sisterin: I announced last night that I would talk on the subject of temperance at this meeting, but in conversation with many of your prominent citizens I am both surprised and delighted to know that you are a strictly temperate people, that your indulgence is limited to the use of our harmless state beverage, cider, which innocently exhilarates but does not inebriate, so it would be a waste of time and perhaps an impertinence for me to attempt to talk on the evils of intemperance, and I will at once pass to a subject which I know will be of much greater interest and benefit to every person who hears my voice, and that is, to tell you about a wonderful medicine, the secret of which the Lord has seen fit to place in my hands for safe keeping, and to prepare and offer it for the healing of the people. The story of this medicine reads like a romance, and the finger of the Lord is plainly in it,

as you will see, as I proceed with the wonderful narrative. Many years ago I became a missionary and started for China. On the way we encountered one of those terrible storms they call a 'monsoon.' The vessel was wrecked and driven ashore on a small island, in the South Seas. I was the only one to survive, all the others, including the crew and passengers, perished. The Lord had an object in saving me, as you will see. This island was inhabited by a ferocious race of cannibals. I was soon surrounded by these warlike savages brandishing warclubs; my arms were pinioned behind me, and we started for the jungle.

"Right here I must stop to explain that I had studied medicine and had designed to practice that profession, but become converted and decided to devote my life to converting the heathen. In my reading of medical literature I had at one time become much interested in the description of a plant which had been discovered on some island in the tropics which possessed the most wonderful properties—that of killing the 'bacilli' of every known disease. But only a few plants had ever been found, although many parts of the earth had been searched in vain for it. The name given it was 'Guaphalieum,' which is Latin, and means 'life-saver.' I had become so much interested in the description of this plant that I knew I should recognize it should I ever see it. On the way through the jungle, you can well imagine my surprise and delight in seeing first a single plant, then large beds of it, and indeed we traveled through acres of this precious and long sought for plant. Then it came to me why our ship was wrecked, and why my life was spared, and I was thrown on this island; and from that moment I had no fears for my

personal safety for I knew I was in the hands of the Lord, and He would bring me out all right. I commenced to wonder what means the good Lord would employ to make His will known to me.

"On arrival at the headquarters of the tribe, it was at once made clear. I was taken to the Czar, who was lying on a bed of rushes, and evidently very sick. He looked me over, and, pointing to different parts of my body, spoke in a very feeble voice to the attendants, all of which I interpreted to mean that when they had got me cooked, he would take a slice from the part indicated. By motions I managed to make them understand that I was a physician, and if they would spare my life I would cure their ruler. They talked it over with the Czar, and when he understood, his eyes brightened, and I knew that he accepted my offer. Then I made them understand that I must go into the jungle alone, to get the medicine, and the Czar told them to let me have my own way. I retraced my steps to where I saw the wonderful drug, gathered some of it, pressed out the juice between two stones, placed it in a cup made of a leaf, took it to the sick man, and by motions made him understand that he must swallow it, which he did. All stood around to watch the effect. He lay perfectly still with his eyes closed for about ten minutes, then he opened them ,and a glad smile stole over his countenance; he said in his own language that he felt much better.

"He continued to improve so rapidly that in less than half an hour he got on his feet without help, walked to where I was standing, threw his arms around me and caressed me with great affection; at which the attendants all dropped their war-clubs and fled in terror,

thinking me a god. The Czar made me understand by signs that he wanted me to remain with his tribe, which I felt under the necessity of doing as long as I saw no means of getting away. So I remained on the island more than two years, learning the language and converting them all to Christianity. During this time I was busy gathering this great herb, and am now prepared to offer it for the healing of the nations.

"Now, my friends, I will ask you if you ever knew or heard of a case where the direct guidance of an overruling providence was more in evidence than in all this wonderful story that I have just related. First, inspiring me to study medicine, then my conversion and the command that I should enter the missionary field, the great storm, the wrecking of the ship, directing the angry waves to wash me up on this island alive, the sickness of the Czar, his miraculous recovery and the conversion of an entire tribe to Christianity and, most important of all, the discovery of this wonderful plant, which was only waiting for the opportunity to enter on its great mission for which the great Creator had designed it. And the finger of the Lord no less evident in sending me to your beautiful and enterprising town to heal all of your sick. I have no desire to enrich myself or to profit by the providential care by which I have been preserved and blessed. All the money which I realize from the sale of this medicine will be used to go back to the South Seas to convert the tribes of other islands. So, my friends, when you invest a dollar in this medicine you are not only saving your own lives, but you are performing a sacred duty by contributing toward the conversion of the lost tribes of the South Sea Islands, who have never as yet heard the blessed

message of salvation, which your money will send to them."

All of this was said with such lachrymose unction that the audience was visibly affected; many of the more emotional women shedding tears. After the meeting was dismissed a large throng gathered around him, congratulating him on his many narrow escapes, and for his unselfish devotion to the great cause in which he was engaged. Many requested that he save a box of the wonderful medicine for them.

As the Rev. Jedediah Dyer is a type in all essential particulars not only of the secret medicine fraternity, but of the religious and temperance fakirs, it will render his career more interesting and instructive if a digression is made here to give a brief sketch of the life of this interesting individual. Early in life he had two leading characteristics, viz.: a disinclination for honest work and a strong "religious" tendency, so at an early age he became "converted" and "spoke in meeting." As he reached manhood he "felt an irresistible call to preach the gospel," as he afterwards proclaimed, and soon become a peripatetic exhorter and finally entered the Methodist denomination as an itinerant preacher.

He married and in orderly succession came a numerous brood of little Dyers to "bless his home." His poor wife, as is often the case, stayed constantly at home, and with the brood starved and shivered on his two hundred dollar salary, while he, by making a "parish call" just at meal time for the three daily meals, managed to grow fat. His greatest anxiety usually was for the salvation of the souls of the female portion of his various flocks, and his over-enthusiasm

for the accomplishment of this object was often misinterpreted by the husbands or brothers of the objects of his solicitous care, so that he was generally on the move. In the course of time his wife broke down and died, and the children were scattered among her relatives, and he was thereby left free to enter a "wider field of usefulness." He had frequently been a leader in "revival meetings," and had gained such a reputation as an effective exhorter, that he was in constant demand, so he decided to devote his entire time and energies to spreading the gospel among the unregenerate. He was a man of more than ordinary ability, with a certain kind of shrewdness, which enabled him to keep an eye to the main chance. He was possessed of great lung power, combined with that unctious sonorousness which particularly adapted him for "revival work," for with a large class of people, volume and intonation are more effective than logic.

He would have been successful in this field had it not been for his over-solicitude for the spiritual welfare of the female portion of his audiences—especially the more attractive ones—as has already been told. In this his motives often failed to be appreciated, and as a consequence he found it convenient and safe to depart for new fields at an earlier date than he had intended. This unfortunate phase of his enthusiasm finally culminated in a "misunderstanding" which caused him to abruptly abandon a most successful "awakening," taking a short cut across lots with an irate husband a close second, but his ability as a pedestrian was so stimulated by the sight of a double-barreled shot-gun that a safe distance was soon placed between himself and his blood-thirsty pursuer.

This last depressing incident made some other outlet for the exercise of his varied gifts and ability imperative. He had during his experience as a minister, like all other members of the professon, been the recipient of a continuous stream of illuminating "medical literature," through which he had become deeply impressed with the sacredness of the humane calling of ministering to the sick, as exemplified by returned missionaries and the great "thinkers" who had brought to light the hidden mysteries of Nature in the form of specifics for banishing disease and suffering from the world. Indeed his photograph and "testimonial" had at one time been prominently displayed in nearly all of the religious journals, carrying a conviction to a "suffering world" of the potency of one of these "great discoveries." The logical sequence of this combination of events was a determination to enter on the sacred mission of healing the sick, combined with gospel and temperance features, as convenient and effective accessories.

He was by natural endowment eminently qualified to successfully enter upon a quack medicine campaign. With the intuitive and acquired factors of a vivid imagination, total disregard for truth, absence of all moral perceptions, ingenuity in constructive lying and a large stock of hypocritical sanctity, it required little effort to formulate and put in motion a body and soul healing enterprise. The now "Doctor" Dyer ordered from a manufacturing chemist a large quantity of pills, the only conditions being that they be perfectly harmless and cheap, and entered on the vital and most difficult part of the enterprise—that of constructing a grotesque but plausible "history of the wonderful discovery," the successful result of which has already been made familiar to the reader.

(The facts of this history I gained years after the events that are now being recorded. The secret of the "discovery" I had from the lips of the chemist who made the pills, and he assured me with a smile that the conditions imposed—especially as regarded the harmless nature of the medicine—had been fully complied with.) He was for a time wonderfully successful, but could not stand prosperity and soon became dissolute in his habits, and had become so notorious that at the time of this writing his field of operations was restricted to the remote places where his reputation had not preceded him, and for many years he eked out a precarious livelihood at the expense of the credulity of the simple people among whom and upon whom he prayed and preyed. Particular emphasis is given to the disparity between the "history" of this medicine and the actual facts, as it is typical. Positive assurance can be given those who are so unfortunate as to read quack medicine advertisements and literature, and squander their money as a consequence, that the disparity between the spectacular claims of "wonderful discoveries" and miraculous "cures" is as great as in the case just described.

When we returned to the house after the "lecture" father expressed the most enthusiastic interest in the wonderful medicine, and insisted that he repeat the story with any additional details that he might have omitted in his lecture. We all listened to the blood-curdling story with wonder and awe. Then he and father prayed. Father went outside his well worn conventional route and "praised the Lord for his goodness in using this remarkable instrumentality for bringing to light this most remarkable medicine and for his wis-

dom in sending that ship to the bottom by which means a whole island full of heathen were converted to Christianity."

After the Rev. Jedediah had retired, mother said to father: "Do you believe that story?"

"Believe it! of course I do! It has the genuine ring of truth about it and I wish everyone who doubts the existence of an overruling Providence could hear that story. I guess it would cure them of their doubts!"

Mother did not fully share in father's enthusiasm and implicit belief, for she answered:

"While his story is different, yet it sounds very much like all the medical literature that you get, and his medicine is probably worth about as much. No, he is a lying old sot and hypocrite, as well as a dead beat. The money that he is going to convert the heathen will go down his throat in the shape of old rye."

Father started for bed with the trite remark that there are "none so blind as those who will not see." For the next two or three days the reverend doctor used his time in calling at the different houses and presenting the claims of his medicine and repeating his story with many embellishments, and assuring all that the pills would cure any disease, including cancer, consumption, Bright's disease, etc., and a pill taken every night at bed time would ward off all disease, and no one need die until they died with old age. A box contained 25 pills and the price was one dollar. He explained that the medicine was very rare and costly, that he was the only one living who knew where to find it, and when he died the secret would die with him, and this was the only chance to obtain a supply of the great life-saver. He would conclude by saying: "If you want to live a

happy life, free from pain and disease, to a green old age, buy a supply of these pills; if you don't, don't—that is all I have to say." At about every house, if they had a dollar, he got it, and at many he got several dollars—all they had. When he had finished canvassing the town he told father of his success, who inquired with great anxiety if he had any pills left. He said he had just six boxes which he might have for five dollars; father said he would take them.

"Brother Dobson," said the Rev. Doctor, "I have got an idea!" Now an idea was so rare and novel a thing to father, that he was hardly able to recognize one when he saw it, so he waited in an expectant attitude. "While I won't turn out for anybody," commenced the Rev. Doctor, "when it comes to preachin', I must acknowledge that you can lay me out on prayer. Now it has occurred to me that by combining our separate accomplishments and going on the road together we could do a smashing medicine business. I have thought it all out and this is my plan and how the thing will work! We will go into a town and stop at different hotels, or if there is only one, stop at that, but be very careful not to make any sign that we know each other. If there is not a prayer meeting on we will wait around until there is; then I will go in and take my seat. When it is well under way you come in and take a seat in a different part of the house; when I have a chance I will get up and talk, and my subject will be prayer. I will spread myself on the beauty and effectiveness of prayer—and you know I can talk some—get the audience all stirred up on the subject, and I will close with something like this: 'Oh, Lord, inspire some one to lead us in prayer that will bring all the sinners

in this house to their knees.' Then the pastor or the leader will probably say: 'If any one feels that the spirit is moving him let him now make it known.' After waiting a decent length of time you will say: 'I'm a stranger among you, but I feel that the good Lord has called upon me to use my feeble powers to help build up His kingdom,' or something like that. Then give them one of your wallopers!

"After the meeting is closed the brothers and sisters will gather about us to know who we are. I will introduce myself as the Rev. Dr. Dyer, and will ask if anyone knows who that brother is who made that glorious prayer; you can be asking a similar question about me, and you will express a wish to meet me. You will approach my group, when naturally an introduction will follow. You will say: 'Dyer—Dyer. You are not the Rev. Jedediah Dyer, are you?' I will try and blush a little and modestly admit that I am that humble individual. Then you will say to those surrounding us: 'I have heard of this man many times, and I can assure you that I have every reason to praise the Lord for bringing me here tonight to meet the man that saved my life.'

"They will, of course, be curious to know more about it, and you will explain that I am the discoverer of a wonderful medicine which you had heard of, after all the doctors had given you up, and it made a well man of you in a few days, and you will shake me by the hand again and praise the Lord. Then having broken the ice I will explain in a few words that I am the discoverer of the medicine to which you refer, and am under the guidance of the Lord distributing it to the sick, and desire to give a lecture and tell all about it; then

the pastor will doubtless offer me the use of his church or lecture-room and make an announcement then and there for the lecture. Now you can see how the thing can be done, and in a way that will cost nothing, and be sure to give us a full house, when I will give a history of the medicine as you have already heard it. The more I think of this plan the surer I am that it will work like a charm and we can make ourselves rich in a short time. This program will, of course, have to be changed to meet the varying conditions in each town as we may find them, but that can be left to develop itself as we go along. I will pay all expenses and give you one-fourth of the net proceeds. Now what do you say?"

Father had given the closest attention to the development of this great plan, and visions of glory and wealth began to loom up before his imagination. But he finally protested: "The part I am to play will not be true."

"True, be dam—," the doctor inadvertently commenced, but changed to—"I was about to say that this is a business proposition and we will have to use business methods, and if you have any scruples about adapting means to ends you will not do."

This logic was a little obscure to father's comprehension, but he said he would not decide without consulting mother, and would let him know in the afternoon. Father broached the subject to mother by saying that the doctor had made him a flattering offer to go on the road, and assist him in selling his medicine, taking good care not to reveal the scheme that the doctor had unfolded. Mother was so elated with the prospect of his earning something, if nothing more than his

living, that she at once advised him to accept the offer. Father was elated, and lost no time in communicating his favorable decision. They arranged to start the next morning, as on that day the stage left for town. Mother packed father's valise with that care and solicitude characteristic of woman, no matter how unworthy the object. The next morning they were up bright and early, and while breakfast was preparing the doctor packed his trunk and father helped to bring it down, remarking that it was not as heavy as when they carried it up, which the doctor explained by referring to his large sales of medicine. After breakfast, father was standing outside the door, valise in hand, our guest asked mother for his bill. She said it was but six dollars. He counted out one dollar in small change, and handing it to her, said: "That squares us." She asked what he meant. He said: "Your husband took five dollars' worth of my medicine, and one makes six, ain't that plain?" Mother's indignation was of so terrific a nature that she could not speak, and the Rev. Jedediah, seeing the dangerous light in her eyes, did not stop to discuss the matter, but hurried after father, who, anticipating the inevitable storm, had with greater celerity than was his wont placed himself at a safe distance from the storm center. Mother resorted to the only recourse left to woman, "a good cry." She soon, however, regained her composure and usual cheerful spirits, and said, that after all she ought to be happy, for she was rid of two men, one the meanest and the other the laziest man in the world.

This interesting aggregation chose for its initiatory field a small town in a remote part of the State, and their arrival was most opportune, for they found a "re-

vival" in full operation; and the highly excited condition of the public mind peculiarly fitted it for the successful exploitation of any kind of a fake, and the experienced "head of the firm" took in the situation at the first glance, and said he recognized "the hand of Providence" in providing so favorable an opening for launching their enterprise. The "doctor" took father into his room to coach him.

"Now," he said, "we will attend the meeting tonight; I will make an exhortation that will make their hair stand, and you go me one better at prayer; we will leave as soon as the meeting closes; that will cause the people to talk about us and wonder who we are, which will be a great ad. for us as our scheme develops. Tomorrow, go into the stores where they sell medicines, and ask for a box of Dyer's Salvation Pills. Of course they will not have them, and you will say 'that is too bad; this medicine cured me of the worst case of rheumatiz, and I wanted a box to send to a friend,' and so on. Get in conversation with people you happen to meet and manage to bring up the subject of rheumatiz, and tell them how you were cured; and mind, when we are introduced at the close of the meeting tomorrow evening, according to our plan, rheumatiz is the disease you are to talk about; say you could not raise your hand to your head for years, but a box of these pills restored you to a new man in a few weeks.

"I do not mean that these are the exact words that you are to use, but I simply throw this out as a suggestion; and mind, when we happen to meet in public, until we are 'introduced' be careful to give no sign that you know me. This program will do for this place, and at the next we can change it according to circumstances."

"But," father protested, "what you say about rheumatism is not true. I never had that complaint, and never took any of your medicine."

"Damn the truth!" broke in the "doctor." "Now don't make any fool woman objections. We're out for business, and I can see a fortune ahead of us, if you don't go and kick everything over with some dumb foolishness. Now listen: You must think up the biggest lies you can, never pretend to tell the truth, and if you have any scruples about it you will never be a success in the medicine business."

Father asked if he did not tell the truth about the discovery of his medicine.

"Hell, no!" the "doctor" frankly answered. "All I know about the medicine is that it will not hurt anyone, and that is all that is necessary to know in this business. Now don't ask any more fool questions, but follow my example and your fortune is made."

Father's conscience was of the elastic kind which readily adapts itself to any new environment, so he readily consented to play his part to the best of his ability.

At the meeting that night the program outlined by the doctor worked out to their satisfaction. Their appeals were most powerful and effective, as evidenced by the large numbers that rose for prayers. The interest in them was as the doctor had predicted. Everybody inquired of his neighbor who they were, but no one knew. The next evening they were on hand and exhorted and prayed with even more fervency and effect than on the previous evening. After the meeting the people flocked around them, and according to program father was introduced to "the Rev. Dr. Dyer." Father

shook hands with him and inquired if he was a relative of the "Rev. Jedediah Dyer." He modestly replied: "I am that humble individual." Father feigned great astonishment and again grasped him by the hand and said to those around him: "You are probably not aware who it is you have in your midst. I have had good reason to know of this gentleman for a long time, and I thank the good Lord that I have now the privilege of meeting him face to face. I know him as the discoverer of a wonderful medicine that brought me back from death's door to perfect health, after all the doctors had given me up. I was helpless with rheumatism for more than ten years—could not move a limb for much of the time. I suffered the tortures of the damned. I took just one box of this medicine and in a week was a perfectly well man as you see me now, glory to God!" And he again wrung the hand of the "benefactor."

All were at once interested to know about this wonderful medicine. The Rev. Doctor said: "I am devoting my life, first to saving souls, and secondly, to saving and prolonging life. The story of my medicine is a long one, and if convenient, and the good people of your town should so desire, I would like the privilege of talking to you and telling my modest story." It was suggested that on the following evening after the close of the religious exercises that he should speak on this interesting subject. He said he thought that it would be a favorable opportunity.

From this time to the next evening the distinguished visitors were about the only subject of conversation, and when the meeting opened that evening there was literally no standing room. The two now celebrated

"workers" entered arm in arm, and received quite an ovation. Under the inspiration of this flattering attention they were receiving, their appeals carried conviction to the most hardened sinners, and when the invitation was extended to "all who wanted to be saved" to rise, the audience arose *en masse,* and the spiritual exaltation pervading the meeting carried everyone to the height of ecstasy. The leader, after the benediction, announced that "the distinguished visitor—the Rev. Jedediah Dyer—discoverer of a wonderful medicine, would entertain the audience with his impressive story."

He came forward to the platform, and told the story substantially as has already been recorded, with many embellishments, however. He dwelt with feeling emphasis on the glory of converting the heathen, and of his anxiety to get back to those islands to carry the gospel to a benighted people. At the close of the "lecture" the pastor of the local church spoke in glowing and feeling terms of the "great personal sacrifice of the man who was willing and enthusiastic to devote his life, and perhaps to sacrifice it at last for the benefit of his fellows, and he was sure that the glory of lifting a whole nation out of darkness into light was worth the cost, whatever it might be." Continuing, he said: "While I believe everyone in this audience will avail him or herself of the opportunity to lay in a stock of this medicine, that has so Providentially come to light, yet I do not think that will be an adequate expression of the great obligation which this community is under to this distinguished gentleman, and suggest that a collection be now taken for him, to help extend the gospel into the dark places of the earth." Instant-

ly many were on their feet to "pass the hat." Everyone present seemed to give all they had, for the hats came back filled. When it was presented to "the reverend gentleman," he was so overcome that he was unable to speak for some minutes; then with great feeling he thanked his brothers and sisters, and promised that every cent of it would be religiously kept to be devoted to the sacred purpose for which it had been contributed.

When the two worthies reached their hotel, and were safely inside their room, they carefully locked the door, stuffed paper in the keyhole, saw that the windows were closed and locked, and the curtains carefully drawn. The "doctor" then threw himself into a chair and indulged in long and uncontrollable laughter. The one redeeming quality of this versatile individual was an acute sense of humor. As soon as he could control himself he delivered the trite apothegem, "What fools these mortals be." His hilarity and philosophy made no impression on father's unappreciative dullness, so the "doctor" assumed his business pose and said: "Let us get down to buiness and count up the loot." Their amazement and ecstasy may be guessed when the result showed $210.37. They shook hands and embraced, and would have given several war-whoops had they been out of hearing distance of others.

"Dobson," the doctor began, "you're a genius; your 'rheumatiz' story is a corker! If you keep on improving you will soon distance me in lying as easily as you now do in praying. It is such a pity that your wonderful ability has lain dormant so long; you were cut out for a patent medicine man, and if you stick, and work your wonderful imagination for all it is worth, I predict that it will not be long before your name will

be added to the long list of the world's benefactors who have brought to light nature's hidden resources for healing the sick"—and he laughed heartily at his own wit.

"Now to show you that I mean all this, and that I appreciate all you have done to make our stay here both pleasant and profitable, I am going to do the generous thing by you. I am going to divide this money equally between us," and he counted out $105.18, and pushed it over to father, remarking: "I promised that this money should all go to the heathen, and now they have got it." It was more money than father had ever had at one time in his life, and he could hardly realize that it was real. The next day he wrote mother and sent her $50. He dwelt in glowing terms on the wonderful success they were having, and was sure that he would come home a rich man. Mother was at first overjoyed at the sight of so much money, and the prospect of a change for the better in her hard life, but in a few minutes a shadow was visible on her countenance, tears welled up in her eyes; she pushed the money from her and said: "He did not get this money honestly; it was not earned, but filched from foolish credulous people by fraud and deception, and without doubt at the cost of deprivation and suffering on the part of women and children. No, honest poverty is sweet when compared with riches obtained by the sacrifice of honor and honesty."

The Rev. "Doctor" knew by the way things were working that the demand for the medicine would be very great, so he telegraphed the manufacturer for an ample supply, which came opportunely. During the next two or three days the people of the town literally

tumbled over each other to get a supply of the "wonderful medicine," and probably not a family within a radius of six or eight miles but carried home from one to six boxes of this evidence of "Providential care."

From here they visited several towns, widely apart, with varying success, on the whole, however, very favorable. Father rapidly improved in his two specialties—praying and lying—until he became a hero in the eyes of his superior. They finally brought up in a town in New Hampshire, which under the beneficent regime of prohibition was "wide open." After making a survey of the town, and seeing the large number of saloons, and the great amount of drunkenness, they came to the conclusion that there would be the most money in a temperance campaign. Accordingly they waited on a local clergyman and obtained the use of his church, with a promise of his cooperation. The campaign had continued for several days ,and was rapidly gaining in interest; but dark days were in store for them. The Rev. Jedediah was laboring under two adverse conditions, viz., a dangerous degree of prosperity and the craving of a thirst intensified by weeks of abstinence. He went on a protracted spree, and father had to announce that in consequence of the "severe illness" of the "evangelist" the meetings were indefinitely postponed. Father faithfully took care of him for about a week, when he had sufficiently recovered to be very repentant, but much prostrated. Much to father's regret he announced that he "had better go home and lay off for a while, to get a much needed rest."

Father's only alternative was to come home, much to the surprise of everyone, as his success had become the

common subject of conversation of the entire community, and his final return, loaded down with both riches and honors, was freely predicted. To all inquiries and comments father had the unanswerable explanation of his superior's sickness. He resumed his old seat in Bige's store, and discoursed with ever-increasing enthusiasm on their success, both in evangelization and on the sale of their great medicine, all of which was listened to with open-mouthed wonder by the many who were attracted there to hear his glowing accounts of what he had seen and what he had done. His prestige in the church was noticeably enhanced by his greater volubility and variety in prayer. He was paid much deference by everyone except mother, who gave him back his money and advised him if it were possible to return it to those whom he had victimized, and warned him never in her hearing to open his mouth about the disgraceful business in which he had been engaged. Several months passed and he did not hear from the Rev. Jedediah, and Bige suggested "why don't you go into the business on your own hook?" The suggestion was eagerly taken up by the club, and was discussed from all points of view. Bige said that father evidently had great natural ability for the business, and with his experience, knowing just how to work it, there could be no doubt of his success. Father and all the rest wondered why this was not thought of before, and the subject at once became the absorbing theme of discussion.

Father applied himself with great diligence in solving the many problems involved in his new enterprise. His enthusiasm increased as the boundless possibilities of the business gradually unfolded under the illuminat-

ing discussions and advice of the club, and especially the wise and mature suggestions of Bige, with whom he held many conferences behind closed doors. His short but eventful experience under the tutelage of the Rev. Jedediah Dyer was his inspiration in evolving the various contingencies of the prospective invasion of the strongholds of the common enemy, disease. All who took part in the discussions were agreed that there were two fundamental principles necessary for the successful exploitation of a medical enterprise, and these were, first: "A new and wonderful discovery in the medical and healing art," and second: A religious or reformatory inspiration as a motive for the "discovery" and its introduction to the public. It was all easy enough except the "discovery" of the specific. It was the consensus of opinion, evolved from the faithful perusal of quack medicine literature for many years, that all medicines were of necessity of miraculous origin, so father was advised to pray for the necessary inspiration. This he did with all the eloquence and intensity born of an undoubting faith that his prayers would be heard and answered. Yet he failed to receive any tangible evidence that the world was suffering for a new miracle in healing.

Bige suggested that he had an old pharmacopœia, and perhaps a study of that might bring some light. Father eagerly embraced this suggestion, and for the next few weeks he was absorbed night and day in the study of this abstruse and obsolete treatise. Through its therapeutic index there came what he hailed as an undoubted answer to his prayers. He learned that cubeb is good for abscesses, carbonate of iron for anæmia, chloroform and ether for heart troubles, croton oil for

apoplexy, digitalis and belladonna for asthma, elaterium for Bright's disease, ipecac for bronchitis, bromine and cundurango for cancer, potassium iodide for catarrh, spirit of nitrous ether and tartar emetic for colds, wild cherry and ipecac for coughs, lobelia and senega for croup, buchu and juniper for dropsy, bismuth and ginger for dyspepsia, cinchona and potassium acetate for fevers, willow bark for rheumatism, pepper for headache, nux vomica for indigestion, opium for insomnia, and so on through the entire list.

While he was struggling with this array of abstruse facts, light of a sudden broke in upon his burdened mind. The suggestion came as a revelation: "Why not combine all of these medicines in one preparation, so that when the patient takes a dose, no matter what the disease may be, there will be somewhere in the mixture the proper remedy for the particular disease?" For a moment there arose in his mind the troublesome question, "What would become of the other constituents of the compound?" The same kind of logic easily disposed of this contingency by suggesting that finding nothing to antagonize their specific properties, they would pass off harmlessly. Father at once communicated his inspired light to Bige, who also recognized the "hand of providence" in it, but said it was all so plain and reasonable that the only wonder was that it had not been thought of independent of inspiration. Father had learned through his study of the pharmacopœia that all preparations, like tinctures, fluid extracts, and about all fluid medicines required an alcoholic menstruum. Pondering on this fact, a new light burst upon him, suggesting the moral fulcrum, which he knew was necessary for success. He would antagonize

the pharmacopœia and denounce its requirements for the use of alcohol as immoral and wicked, and the primary cause of most of the drunkenness. He would make his a temperance medicine by using sweet cider for the vehicle, and start a crusade against all medicines containing alcohol and exploit his "great discovery" (he had already named it "Dr. Dobson's Great Medical Discovery") as the one and only great temperance medicine.

He would hold temperance meetings which would easily and naturally lead up to his temperance medicine, and he could easily picture a repetition for the rush for Dr. Dyer's Salvation Pills. This last burst of light confirmed him in the conviction that it was the "Lord's doings." Bige received the account of this later development with almost reverential awe. He said there could be no doubt that father had been "divinely" chosen for a great and beneficent work. Father's enthusiasm and satisfaction knew no bounds. At the prayer-meeting that evening he made a most profound impression by announcing his call to a great work of reform, and gave a detailed account of the long struggle he had for light to guide him into the right path.

This is in part what he said: "I had begun to lose all faith in prayer, little thinking that the good Lord would in his own good time, and in his own way, reveal even more than I had asked. I will never doubt His word again, and now I know I am called to do the Master's work in spreading the gospel of temperance, and to literally cast out devils in substituting a medicine free from alcohol, for that containing this arch enemy of mankind." This and much more was taken from his

campaign lecture, that he had been at work on for some time. From this time he was a hero and the most talked of man in town. Everybody commenced to call him "Doctor"—a title which he greatly relished. It would have been a great relief to him could he have communicated his aspirations and brilliant prospects to mother, but every time he broached the subject she "shut him up" with a few drastic words. She was kept thoroughly posted, however, and while she had no doubt that it would all end in talk, as all his enterprises had, yet she little dreamed of the tragic ending which really came.

The two important fundamental essentials, the "discovery" and its reformatory corollary being settled, the next step was a matter of ordinary business detail. He requested Bige to send to market for a stock of the drugs that he had listed from the pharmacopœia. He was not very clear as to the quantity that he would require ,but finally decided that "twenty-five cents' worth" of each of the drugs would do for a "starter." The style and size of the package was a matter that required long and patient deliberation. The final decision was that a quart bottle, while unusual in size, would appeal most favorably to the sufferers. Bige said it would look very liberal, besides as the medicine was to be a cure for every kind of disease, every family should keep on hand at least a quart. The price decided upon was $2.00 a bottle, which seemed reasonable for so large a quantity of a universal cure.

As a room for the storage of material and the manufacture of the medicine became a necessary part of the enterprise, father was prompted to tell mother of the great work upon which he was entering, and said

he would like an unused back kitchen for his "laboratory." Mother made no objections, so he at once set about making the necessary changes to adapt it to the purpose of a "home office and laboratories" of a medical enterprise that was to revolutionize the art of healing. After completing the necessary changes he thought it would add dignity and impressiveness to the enterprise by putting up a sign. This he painted and installed in a conspicuous place. It read:

DOCTOR DOBSON'S
LABORATORY.

The sign did indeed produce a sensation. Everybody stopped to read it and to talk about it. As it got noised around, people came from far and near to see it. It had such a suggestion of the mysterious that people liked to talk about it, and speculate on the transmutation process probably going on behind the closed door, on which was the legend "No admittance." This prohibition of itself was sufficient to crystalize mere curiosity into theories of occult manipulations and rare and potent products. Father's prayer-meeting account of "divine light" which illuminated his path and made all things clear to him had been repeated and discussed for miles around, and it soon became a firmly settled belief that father had been visited by a direct communication from "on high," and that a miracle of healing was about to bless the world. Great deference was paid him whenever he appeard in public, and his sudden appearance in any gathering of men would cause all hilarity to suddenly cease.

He fully appreciated this homage, and had acumen enough to see that he could greatly enhance this feeling

by withdrawing himself as much as possible from the public gaze. This he did by closely confining himself to his laboratory. His time was occupied, however, not in supernatural communings or abstract research, as was generally surmised, but in attentively reading the cords of "medical literature" which had been carefully preserved, and which covered about the entire field of the descriptive literature of quackery. His object was to adjust his mind to thinking in medical terms, and to evolve a circular setting forth in impressive language the history and virtues of his forthcoming specific. After days and nights of labor, and with suggestions of Bige, he brought out a pyrotechnic that for unique and spectacular crudities might serve as a model for quack medicine literature for all time to come. The following is a facsimile of this great literary effort:

DOCTOR DOBSON'S
MIRACLE
—OR—
GREAT MEDICAL WONDER.

A medicine not of human invention or discovery, but was revealed to the Doctor by a ray of divine light. It is a positive and immediate cure for Consumption, Whooping Cough, Colds, Lockjaw, Diabetes, Heart Disease, Indigestion, Lumbago, Bright's Disease, Rheumatism, Rickets, Sores, Headaches, Coughs—in short, every disease that poor humanity is subject to. If the medicine is taken in time all disease will be prevented. It is a purely temperance medicine, free from that scourge of the human race, alcohol. It is the only medicine in the world possessing this virtue, and there-

fore should commend itself to all good Christian and temperance people. The doctor has for a long time used this medicine in his own family, for which purpose it was revealed to him, but now he feels it his duty to admit suffering humanity to the privilege of being healed by this great specific. It is put up in quart bottles and sold for the nominal sum of $2 a bottle. It should be given freely, especially to the aged and young on account of its invigorating and vitalizing powers. Every family should have at least two bottles of this medicine on hand at all times and taken freely. It is better to keep well than to get well. The medicine will make you do either.

To be had only of Doctor Lysander Demitriss Dobson.

It should be observed that father was not entitled to the credit of originating the above, as it was simply compiled from his "medical library." In his enthusiastic haste to spread his fame, he could not wait until the medicine was ready before making his announcement. He sent to the city a rush order for 5,000 copies of the above remarkable circular. The order was promptly filled, and he at once distributed as many as he could through the local post-office. The drugs had not arrived, and he was not prepared to meet the unexpected demand that his circular at once created. People came to the house, and orders came by mail. He was harrassed with the perplexing necessity of inventing all kinds of excuses, being very careful not to admit that the medicine was not yet prepared. He settled down to the plausible explanation that the unexpected demand had soon exhausted his stock, that its preparation being a very intricate and delicate process,

and that it required time for it to mature, that the delay could not be avoided. But he said he had a large quantity in process and when ready he would make the announcement. People generally left their orders, to be filled as soon as possible. This was the most trying ordeal that father had ever encountered, and it would have been a great relief could he have consulted mother, a thing he did not venture to do.

He could not sleep or eat, and rapidly lost flesh, and seemed on the verge of a collapse. But this catastrophe was prevented by the timely arrival of his stock of drugs. Then the perplexing problem of compounding them in the proper proportions presented itself. If he had thought of this important item at all, he had dismissed it with the optimistic belief that the "light" that had guided his thus far would continue to be his inspiration. But the inspiration did not put in an appearance, and the demand was daily becoming more importunate, so he must act at once. He finally reasoned that the price ought to determine the relative proportions; that the more expensive the medicine it must follow that the dose should be smaller. His "25 cents' worth" of each kind of medicine amounted in quantity from an ounce to a pound, and he ingeniously reasoned that this fact confirmed his theory, a conclusion certainly as logical as any feature of the enterprise. Accordingly he dumped the entire lot into a tub, and added a sufficient amount of sweet cider to bring the product up to twelve quarts—that is, to make one dozen bottles of the medicine. He devoted his time for the next two days to frequently stirring the mixture, at the end of which time he thought it sufficiently "made" to bottle. In performing this part of the

process he kept it constantly agitated, so that when it had stood for a short time, the sediment nearly half filled the bottle. He knew nothing and cared less for pharmaceutical niceties, and said that it was all medicine and it was all there, and he changed the copy of his label so that it presented a prominent line which read, "shake vigorously before taking."

He had not visited Bige's store for several weeks, but now that he had successfully solved all the perplexing problems that had confronted him, and his mind was at last free from the harassing worry of a great responsibility, he thought it proper that he announce the pleasing fact to the club. All the members were in their places when he appeared among them, and his reception was of a most cordial and pleasing nature. In response to their inquiries he stated with much dignity his final triumph over all difficulties, and that he was now ready to enter the sacred calling of relieving suffering and healing the sick, and he proudly produced a bottle of his "discovery." It was examined critically, and all expressed the opinion that "it looked as though there might be something to it." Lem asked how it tasted and acted, father was forced to acknowledge that his mind had been so taken up with its preparation that he had not thought to taste of it. Bige suggested—and it seemed a most reasonable proposition—that before the medicine was started on its great mission, that seevral persons, varying in constitution and habit, should take a dose to be sure that everything was properly adjusted, etc.

It was proposed that each member of the club should take the maximum dose as directed in the circular, viz: a wineglassful. Bige produced a corkscrew, but did not

possess a wineglass. Father said he could guess near enough, in a glass tumbler. After a vigorous shaking of the bottle, he drew the cork and poured out a generous dose, and without any premonition swallowed it. Despite his desperate effort to appear calm and indifferent, he gasped, several tears came into his eyes, and his countenance betrayed deep emotion, but by a desperate effort he regained his composure. Bige's turn came next, and notwithstanding the mucuous membrane of his throat and stomach had become almost necrosed by the rivers of patent medicines that had been running down his throat for many years, after a convulsive effort he got it down, but the tears fairly started from his glass eye.

The other members by this time had grown a little pale, but no one thought of "backing out," so they all took the dose with contortions limited by their respective powers of endurance. All gained a degree of composure after a while, excepting Jim Slack; his stomach rebelled, but out of regard for father's feelings, he brought into action all his reserve will power, in a heroic determination to keep it down. But nature at last asserted itself, with an emphasis which expressed resentment at any attempt to interfere with its freedom of action. If a composite picture of the grimaces and facial contortions of the different members of the group could have been taken it would have expressed the crystalized acme of mortal agony.

The unfortunate result of the experiment on Jim, for the moment, seemed disastrous to the reputation of the medicine, but father had become well equipped for just such emergencies by his extensive reading of his favorite literature, so he explained with the assurance

of authority that it was "liable to act that way, in some cases, but it was evidence that it had accomplished its purpose, and had the real stuff in it." He elaborated the fact that the great mission of the medicine was to "clear the systum," and to act in that way was as effective as any other. An ominous silence soon came over the assembly, and one by one hurriedly took their departure, all but Jim Slack. He said he did not feel able to get home alone, so father took him by the arm and assisted him to the door of his house and saw him safely inside. Father came home and went at once to his room, and to his bed as soon as he could disrobe. When mother retired he was sleeping, but she noticed his heavy breathing and a pallor on his countenance. She concluded that he had got excited in some discussion, and that nothing of a serious nature was the matter.

About one o'clock he woke mother up and said he thought he was dying. She was not very much alarmed, as she had heard him make this same observation many times before, but when she got up, lighted the lamp and saw the death-like pallor of his countenance, felt of his pulse and found it hardly perceptible, she was really alarmed, and asked him how he felt; he replied in a weak voice that he was in great pain, and had a feeling all over him unlike anything that he had ever experienced, and was sure it meant death in a very short time, and with a groan of despair he implored mother to do something. Great drops of perspiration stood out on his forehead, and his stony eyes showed the terror with which he was seized at the thought of so soon going to that "blessed abode" which he had so often longed for (on prayer-meeting night). Mother

wanted to know what he had been taking or what he had been doing. His terror forced the reluctant confession that he had taken a dose of his own medicine. Mother was at a loss to know just what to do in such an emergency, but she set about getting some hot water, and while she was very much frightened, her exquisite sense of the ludicrous caused her to smile audibly several times while about these preparations.

As soon as the water was hot she applied hot cloths to his stomach and gave him large doses of mustard and water. This heroic treatment finally produced copious emesis, after which she gave him some brandy and he gradually began to feel better. It was broad daylight, however, before he had recovered from his terror at the thought of dying, sufficiently to think of anything but himself. Then it came over him that he had given the same dose to the others, and the thought of what the result might be fairly paralyzed him. Hastily calling mother, he told her with bated breath that he had given the same dose to Bige, Jim Slack, Lem Gibson, Sam Small, Dick Graham and Dan Jones, and perhaps they were all dead. Mother reassured him somewhat by saying that if any of them were dead they would have heard of it, and that she would go around to the houses and see how they were. She first went to Bige's store. The front door was locked, but she gained an entrance through a back way. She found Bige in a most pitiable condition. He said that he had had the "awfulest night that he had ever had." That he had no idea of living till morning, but felt some better now. Mother left with the promise to return as soon as possible and bring him some breakfast, and fix up his room. She then visited the other victims, in

turn, and found that they all had had an "awful night" of it. The experience of all of them had been about the same as father's. Their poor wives had been up with them all night, and had applied the same treatment as mother had, with similar results. Nature having been more considerate of Jim Slack, he had faired better. He said he felt "putty comfortable, but very weak." It was several days before all victims were able to resume their places in Bige's store; but when they did they had the most prolific subject for speculation and the advancement and discussion of profound theories, that they had in all their lives. In the meantime the story had got out, and the joke appealed to every one, old and young, wise and simple. Men and women who had never been known to smile before, laughed themselves sick.

Men would meet, shake hands, and commence to laugh, and being unable to speak, pass on. People who had received the circular would get it out, read it, and then contrast its glorious promises with the initial demonstration, and go into convulsions with laughter. At parties and gatherings it was the only subject of conversation, making them livelier and more enjoyable than had ever been known. Even at church, people found it hard to keep their thoughts on serious things; a glance at father's vacant seat would force a smile, and even the parson, if he came to the words "healing" or "inspiration," or anything which suggested the subject, would be obliged to stop and cough behind his handkerchief, and the entire audience would get behind its handkerchief and cough in sympathy. In a word Kiddersville indulged in one prolonged, hearty, inspiring laugh for the first time in its history.

It was a week before father was able to be about the house, and then he would not venture out of doors, unless it was the back door, when he was sure no one would see him. He took down the sign, "Laboratory," stopped going to the "club," church or prayer meeting. But he had not given up all faith or all hope. He spent much time in wistfully looking at his stock of medicine, and wondered what there was in it that made it act in that peculiar and exceedingly disagreeable way. He did not doubt that he had been inspired by some outside power, but the startling question would often intrude itself whether the influence came from above or below. From the way the stuff acted, it induced a strong suspicion that the whole thing was a "put-up job" by the latter malign power. As this impression deepened, there came a corresponding faith that through some more beneficent subtlety, light would break in upon him and direct a way out of his troubles. He could not bring himself to wholly abandon his theory of therapeutics and concluded to keep his stock of medicines for further developments. As cold weather was approaching, and he learned from his study of the ancient pharmacopœia that medicines should be kept at an even and warm temperature, he asked mother for the privilege of storing it in her pantry. She indulged him and gave up one shelf for the purpose.

One night, about two weeks after the medicine had been safely arranged in the space allotted to it, the entire family, including some summer boarders, who were staying late into the season, were suddenly aroused by a terrific noise downstairs, much resembling a bombardment. The children commenced crying, some of the more timid women screamed, father was too ter-

rified to more than set up in bed and blankly stare into space. Mother was the only one to retain any presence of mind; she told father to go down and see what had happened; he said in hoarse whispers that he would be excused—he knew there were burglars in the house and he did not propose to run the risk of being shot—if they would let him alone he would them.

Mother made some uncomplimentary remark about cowards, and said if he was afraid to go she would. Father said she had better, for they would not be as likely to shoot a woman as a man. Mother lighted the lamp, put on her slippers, and in her night-clothes disappeared downstairs. She went into the kitchen, and a glance revealed to her the cause of the great commotion, for there was a nauseating odor of sour cider, and a stream of muddy liquid running across her spotless floor.

When father selected sweet cider for his menstruum, through "inspiration" in the cause of temperance, in his ignorance of the laws of fermentation he ignored the erratic nature of apple-juice. This is what had happened: the cider, aided by the various vegetable ferments which had been added to it, rapidly developed vinous fermentation with the liberation of carbonic acid gas; the pressure becoming irresistible, all the bottles with the exception of three had burst simultaneously. As mother surveyed the extent of the destruction, she became numb with horror; the floor was covered with broken glass, from every one of her spotless shelves the disgusting, sticky stuff was dripping, the walls were covered and little rivulets were running from all points, converging into a river, out across the kitchen floor; all of the dishes were full, and a beauti-

ful frosted cake, which she had completed that night, and which was the pride of her heart, now had the appearance of being chocolate coated.

As she stood there transfixed, unable to move or speak, bang! bang! went two more bottles. As if unerringly aimed by some diabolical malignity, the contents of both bottles struck her fairly on the head, running down over her face, filling her eyes, nose and mouth, and trickling down over her night-clothes. A piece of glass grazed her face and cut a gash in her ear, from which the blood run in a copious stream. Naturally, she gave a hair-lifting scream. Father thought she had been shot and probably killed; he gave a yell of terror and covered his head with the bedclothes.

The next moment he heard someone ascending the stairs with what sounded like a masculine tread, and he commenced to piteously beg for mercy: "Take everything," he said, "but spare our lives." His pleadings ceased when he heard a voice having some familiarity say, "Shut up, you cowardly cur and get out of that bed and dress yourself." Father uncovered his head and sat up in bed. The sight that met his gaze convulsed him with surprise and horror; he was paralyzed; his eyes protruded, his lips parted, but he could not articulate. There stood the woman whom he recognized, as in a dream, his wife, and still not his wife—a woman in an attitude personifying vengeance and despair, with two streams of liquid lightning darting from her eyes, a dark viscid liquid leisurely dripping from her nose, chin, fingers and the folds of her nightrobe.

The dual personalities of woman are an angel and a

tiger. In all normal conditions there is rarely any evidence of this duality, for the angel is in supreme charge. The tiger is only aroused when injustice or ill treatment causes the angel to hide her face and retire. It may be observed, however, that this interchange of prerogative is much more fickle in some than others, and a statement of exact truth demands the admission that in rare cases the angel has an easy time of it through life—indeed, is rarely in evidence.

In mother's case, as she stood there, the angel had fled in terror, and the tiger for the first time in his life had his opportunity. The transformation was as complete as when the amiable Dr. Jekyl became the repulsive Mr. Hyde. In a rasping and terrifying voice, she said: "Get out of that bed and dress yourself dammighty quick"—the tiger wanted to swear, but made a sorry job of it for want of experience. Father obeyed with as much alacrity as his agitated condition would permit. The tiger evidently had some sense of humor, for (she) said: "This is what your wonderful discovery has done for me; shan't I write you a testimonial?"

This was the first intimation that father had that his medicine had any connection with this nightmarish condition of things. He said: "Has it busted?" The tiger said: "Yes, and I'll bust you if you open your idiotic mouth again."

When he was dressed, she started downstairs and said "*come,*" with an intonation that would have caused a cigar store sign to have followed her. Arriving at the kitchen she pointed to the wreck, and the tiger said: "See what your damnation stuff has done; ruined my house; ruined everything." This was said

in a blood-curdling screech that caused father's knees to knock together. "There is one bottle left," said the tiger, "take it out before it goes off." Had he been ordered to face a machine-gun, his terror could not have been greater. He hesitated. "Take it out this instant, or I'll knock your hellidiot head off," said the tiger.

Father would have died in his tracks before he would have gone into that pantry; so he got the tongs, reached in and got a firm grip on the neck of the bottle, and started through the dining-room as the nearest way out; but his nervous condition was not equal to such a feat, and he let it slip. It fell on the floor and went off with a bang that would have gladdened the heart of the small boy on the Fourth of July. Terror took complete possession of him, and in obedience to the first law of nature, he started for the door; but mother —that is, the tiger—sprang after him, and being endowed with superhuman strength, brought him back, threw him on the floor, rolled him over and over in his now celebrated medicine—in fact, she literally mopped up the floor with him. She then stood him up, took him to the door, pushed him out with the warning not to return until she sent for him.

Then she threw herself into a chair and gave vent to her distress by a series of hysterical screams. In the meantime, the lady boarders upstairs, who had been listening, became informed of the cause of this domestic earthquake, retired to bed for the purpose of covering up their heads with the bedclothes, so as not to be heard, and laughed themselves sick. When mother's safety-valve had ceased blowing off she realized that something must be done; so she started a fire in the

stove, put on the boilers and as soon as the water was hot commenced to clean up the floors. The lady boarders had by this time recovered from their mirthful eruption, and taking pity on mother, offered to help her if she would let them have some old dresses. Soon this formidable force was working with a will. The floors were cleaned, the dishes and other things taken out of the pantry, and the ladies, standing on steps and the broad shelf, rapidly cleaned the walls and shelves. Fortunately the stuff had developed a saponaceous property so that it readily responded to the cleaning process. Under the mollifying influence of work the tiger soon discovered that his occupation was gone, and the angel resumed her station.

Mother's angel possessed in the highest degree that most gracious of angelic virtues—an irresistibly keen sense of humor. All at once mother exploded with a peal of her old-time musical laughter, which was a signal for the other ladies to relieve their pent-up feelings. They all laughed till they cried. The work went merrily on, and in an incredibly short time everything was cleaned and put back in place. Then mother prepared a dainty breakfast of tomato-on-toast and other dainties, out of what had escaped the general havoc, and a more hilarious breakfast was never partaken in that house. They discussed the events of the night in all of its comical features, and the shouts of laughter attracted the attention of the passers-by.

After breakfast mother sent me to find father and bring him into the house. I found him sitting on a box in a stall with a horse blanket wrapped around him. He was shivering with cold and fear, and readily accepted the invitation to come into the house. When

he entered he was a pitiable sight; his face, hands and clothing were besmeared with his compound, and added to his fright, he presented such a woe-begone appearance that the ladies hastily left the room to hide their merriment and it was some time before mother could control herself sufficiently to tell him to go to his room, wash and change his clothes.

When he came down mother had breakfast ready for him, which he ate in silence. A close observer would have noticed that while his face was distorted with the conflicting emotions in which his fateful enterprise had involved him, it had put on an expression that had never been seen there before—suggesting a resolution of a definite and desperate nature. He left the table and started in the direction of his "laboratory," every step punctuated with his heroic determination. Mother was curious to know the nature of his mission, so went into an adjoining room where she could see without being seen.

He had taken an axe and was rapidly demolishing the fixtures of the room. Every blow was frightfully emphasized by a profane expletive. The rapid and vigorous strokes of the axe were embellished with the alliteration, "Damn the inspiration," "Damn the medicine," "Damn the goody-goodness," "Damn everything," "Damn"——here he hesitated with the axe poised in the air, for his anathema seemed to cover about everything—but only for a moment, when he struck the final blow which demolished the last remaining vestige of his fixtures, accompanied with the concrete and always justifiable period, "Damn a fool." Mother was both shocked and delighted; shocked at his profanity, but delighted at this evidence that some

latent quality had been vitalized which, though expressed in profanity, was of far greater value than the passive goodness which had thus far controlled his life.

After he had completed the work of demolition, he gathered up the debris, piled it in a heap in the back yard, then he added to it his "medical library," then he went to the cupboard and dumped all his stock of patent medicines into a basket, with all the empty bottles, almanacs and everything that had a suggestion of a patent medicine, even the corkscrew, and added these to the pile, saturating it with kerosene oil, applied a match, and in a short time the whole pile was reduced to its ultimate elements, where it became of some value in the economy of Nature.

When he came into the house mother put her arms around his neck and kissed him, a thing that had not happened for years. "Now," she said, "you seem to have come to your senses, and I hope you will redeem yourself by finding some honorable employment." He answered that through his recent experience he had had a real revelation, which had shown him that he had been a cowardly fool all his life, and that now, as soon as he could find employment, he would go to work and support the family.

It so happened that a New York gentleman, who owned a stock farm in the vicinity, wanted a man to take charge of it. Father applied for the situation and got it. He soon became very efficient and trustworthy, and his pay was rapidly advanced. He demonstrated that he had in him those inherent qualities which develop into the highest type of manhood, under the stimulus of necessity and honorable work, but which in his

case had so long lain dormant under the influence of the blighting mental epilepsy induced by the influences which controlled him. He was also given access to the large and well-selected library, with permission to take as many books home as he liked. His salary was sufficient to support his family in respectability, and mother for the first time in her married life knew what ease and comfort were; also the privileges of the splendid library furnished her with that stimulus and recreation which her hungry and refined soul had longed and waited for during all the hard and weary experience through which she had passed.

A number of years have elapsed since the events of the last chapter were recorded. I must leave these reminiscences which have extended much beyond the original intent, and take up the more specific treatment of the primary object of the narrative—the exposure of some of the features of quackery—to describe the artifices and jugglery of the marauders whose opportunity is the credulity of unthinking and unreasoning people, and of those pathetic objects, the hopelessly incurable. But I must pause for a brief retrospective glance at the events and persons which have furnished the material for this history.

Jim Slack, Sam Small, Dick Graham and Dan Simpson, of the club, had, one by one, found breathing too much of a physical effort, and had stopped, and as a consequence had been buried. Lem Gibson became inspired by father's example, went to work and developed into a man. Good parson Brownlow had gone to his reward. Bige married Hannah Henderson—or, to be more exact, Hannah had married Bige against his will, and he is now patiently waiting the end, and says

he is indifferent as to his final destiny, as either place will be heaven. Father presently made himself indispensable to his employer, and his salary was soon sufficient to support his family in comfort and send his children to school. I was sent to college, and when I had graduated mother was anxious for me to study medicine, which profession was also my own choice.

Accordingly I went to Harvard Medical School, and at the time I am now considering, had graduated and had received my degree of M. D. While perusing my medical studies I naturally was looking ahead with a view of entering into the practice of my profession. I took particular pains to get the history of those with whom I had become associated, and any others that I could learn about, who had graduated at different periods and had entered into practice. The result was far from encouraging—indeed quite depressing, for I found that all except those with influential friends to help them, or who had by some unforseen contingency stepped into a practice, had struggled and starved for years before realizing a paying business or receiving social recognition Medical ethics and a sense of the fitness of things forbids a physician to advertise. All he can do is to hang out his "shingle" and wait and wait, in a large majority of cases in a long and heart-breaking struggle, sustained by hope and a grim determination which is finally rewarded by success to those who possess this quality to the degree that never says die.

Many of the faint-hearted ones drop out and take up with anything that promises immediate returns. On the other hand, I discovered that the advertising "doctors"—ignorant, brazen quacks, men totally ignorant

of the science of medicine—to become famous, had only to insert an advertisement in the papers of "Dr. Jones' new system of practice," or "Dr." Smith's "Great specific that cures all diseases," or "Dr." White's "Medical Institute employing a corps of Specialists," or "Dr." Brown, "The great healer by virtue of being the seventh son of the seventh son," and "Faith cures, Prayer Cures, Osteologists," etc., etc., through the whole catalogue of absurd, grotesque claims—claims so absurd that it would seem that their fraudulent and worthless character must be apparent to ordinary intelligence. As I have said, these quacks have only to make their announcements, plausibly and ingeniously worded, to fill their offices with waiting and eager crowds, consisting mainly of the more intelligent portion of the population of superlatively cultivated and intellectual Boston.

This proud distinction is doubtless supported by the fact that the city supports 142 different religions; that a glib talker can get up on the Common any day in the year, with a brand new and easier plan of salvation, and in half an hour draw a sufficient following to support a new religious sect, and that a cult with a large and enthusiastic following can easily be organized on the postulate that the sun revolves around the earth. A city where fraud, incantation, soothsaying, quackery and every fake scheme in medicine, business or religion thrives and flourishes as nowhere on earth.

I made an exhaustive study of the different phases of quackery—the characteristics of the men, their methods, reasons for their success, etc., etc., and when I saw the ease with which these vampires ingratiate themselves into the "best society" and with little effort

step into a more lucrative business than a regular physician could reasonably expect to do by a lifetime of devotion to his profession; and when I contrasted it with the inevitable and heart-breaking struggle of the young physicians just starting in their profession —young men amply equipped by education and character to successfully minister to the sick, I asked myself, is it worth while for the sake of a mere sentiment to pass through the inevitable and heart-crushing struggle, when by the assumption of some exaggerated power or discovery, or by simply making the announcement in sufficiently fantastic terms, I could insure quick and certain financial success and social position?

I confess I did not have the moral courage to resist the unworthy alternative. In terms as little compromising as possible, I announced my determination to mother. She was horrified at the suggestion, and said that she had suffered so much from quack doctors and quack medicines that it would blight her happiness to know that her son would sacrifice his honor—an honor conferred by a diploma as a physician, and which ought to be too exalted and sacred to be thus wantonly sacrificed. But despite her pleadings and invective, my determination was taken to take the short road to wealth and "fame"—fame as conferred by a thoughtless class of people, but infamous when subjected to the test of conscience, or the conception of an honorable and upright calling.

I read a notice in the "wants" column of a Boston paper for a physician assistant in a "Medical Institute" in that city. I at once wrote, making application for the situation, and stated that I would call in a few days. Accordingly I went to Boston and pre-

sented myself to the head of the "Institute." The "head" and the entire staff consisted of one man. He was about forty years of age, of good manners, dressed in faultless taste and altogether a person who would impress one as a man of ability and attainments. His office was situated in a fashionable neighborhood and consisted of two rooms on the second floor, elegantly finished and furnished with the richest and most costly appointments. The conversation brought out the fact that he did not pretend (to me) to know anything about the science or practice of medicine, and by his "system of practice" he did not need any such knowledge, as he presently showed me.

He said he was handicapped in his practice for want of a knowledge of medical terms. He had got together quite a vocabulary of medical words and terms; he did not know what they meant, but used them haphazard, and whether any of them ever "hit the mark" he could not tell. However, he had noticed that the moral effect was always good. What he wanted was an assistant who could "sling medical talk" and know what it meant. In elaborating his scheme he said he thought it would be a great help to his business to advertise "a corps of specialists," and would like me for the "corps." Then he said he would examine the patient, turn the case over to me and I could go through the form of examination; then we would retire for "consultation," and finally announce to the patient that we were in full accord as to the diagnosis.

He showed me an old stethoscope which he had always used, but acknowledged that he did not know the difference between a heart murmur and "wind in the stomach," "but its use always impresses the pa-

tient with my profound knowledge and the thoroughness of the examination." He said he should want this used in all cases, and after we had retired and "compared notes," and had announced that we fully agreed in the diagnosis, then we would retire for a consultation as to the best treatment. After he had elaborated his scheme he took me into the "laboratory." This consisted of a long room with rows of shelving on either side filled with two-ounce empty bottles. In the center of the room was a long table on which were two five-gallon jugs. Approaching these, he said: "This jug contains compound tincture of gentian, and this one contains compound tincture of gentian, and no matter what ails 'um they get their medicine out of one of these jugs."

So it may readily be seen that when the "corps of physicians" had finally decided on the diagnosis the treatment became a very simple problem. While seated in the office further discussing the project, a carriage drove up to the door, elegantly equipped, with liveried coachman and footman. There alighted from it a lady who, with the assistance of the footman, ascended the stairs and entered the office. The doctor received her with all the grace and graciousness of a Chesterfield, and conducted her to a sumptuous chair. After she had recovered from the effects of the unwonted exertion of ascending the stairs, she rehearsed her "tale of woe." (She evidently belonged to the higher intellectual circles.) She said: "I have consulted all the doctors in this and other cities, and not one of them seems to understand my case. I have also taken every medicine which I have seen advertised, all to no purpose. A friend of mine was afflicted just as I am, and whom

you cured, advised me to consult you, and now I want you to give me a thorough examination, and tell me just what the matter is, for I am prepared to know the worst."

The doctor got out his decrepit stethoscope and proceeded to make a lengthy and impressive examination. After its completion, a sympathetic and considerate hesitation followed, but he finally said: "I am sorry, but as you ask for a candid statement, I feel it my duty to inform you that you are suffering from ankylosis of the liver." At this announcement she turned very pale, burst into tears, and said through her sobs: "That is just what I have feared"; but the doctor hastened to add: "Do not be frightened, madame. While the condition is serious it is not necessarily alarming, as I have a medicine that I have discovered for just such cases as yours. It has never failed yet, and there is no reason why it should in your case." This assurance relieved her agitation and the glow of hope came back to her face; and to give expression to her confidence in the doctor and her gratitude for the encouragement which he gave her, she said:

"I am quite satisfied that your diagnosis is correct, for I have been approaching that conclusion myself for a long time. All the other doctors I have consulted, either did not discover the nature of my trouble or were not frank enough to tell me. Perhaps they might have been afraid of the effect on my nerves, should they explain my trouble in the plain, lucid way that you have; but if I have any one characteristic more pronounced than any other, it is that of bravery—I always want to know the worst, and am ever ready to face it. I felt sure from the thoroughness of your ex-

amination that you would discover my real condition, and frankly tell me the result, and while I had prepared myself to submit to the inevitable, yet it is a great relief—one which fills my soul with new hope and joy—to be assured that you have a medicine that will successfully combat this formidable disease."

The doctor reassured her of this important and most satisfactory fact and retired to his laboratory to prepare the "potent remedy." Presently he returned with two bottles, labeled No. 1 and No. 2 (both bottles being, of course, the simple and harmless compound tincture of gentian), and proceeded to give her the most minute directions for their use. Ten drops of No. 1 to be taken 30 minutes before eating, and 10 drops of No. 2 to be taken on retiring; and he impressed upon her the vital importance of observing these directions in all their minutiæ. He also impressed upon her the absolute necessity of regular and abstemious habits—that she must eat very little meat, and that only once a day, at the mid-day meal; that her diet must be of the simplest; and very sparing in quantity; that she must retire not later than nine o'clock, and take vigorous outdoor exercise—preferably walking. He assured her if she would strictly observe his instructions that her recovery was only a matter of a comparatively short time, but he could not give her this assurance unless she would do so. She replied:

"Doctor, I feel that I have been guided to you by a power outside of myself, and I should as quick think of disobeying a divine edict as to disregard your instructions, so you may rest assured that hard as it may be to deny myself of my usual manner of living—to give up theatres and the luxurious after-theatre din-

ners, and to give up all the attractive social functions —and I may be permitted to confide to you that I am called a leader in our exclusive social set—yet I am ready to make the sacrifice for the sake of that greatest of all boons, health."

"Now," she added, "appreciating your skill as I do, and with the feeling of relief and comfort which your assurance of a speedy recovery gives me, I must insist that your bill be commensurate with your wonderful skill, and the kindness and generous impulses of your heart." To this the doctor replied, without a blush or tremor of voice: "In cases like yours my usual charge is $50.00."

She took from her jeweled purse a roll of bills of large denominations and selected a new $50.00, and handed it to him with the remark that she thought his charges very moderate considering the importance of the service. The doctor then handed her to her carriage with a grace and effusiveness that a prince might envy. During this episode I discovered that this man, while wholly unscrupulous, was possessed of rare common sense, and being brought into daily contact with educated and refined people, and having a very receptive mind, had acquired a correct use of language and a graciousness of manner which completely disguised his profound ignorance. Returning to the office, he opened the conversation by saying: "Now you see just how we do it. This woman is a fair type of my customers. Of course nothing ails her except that which inevitably results from the development of the bacterium of wealth. By following my advice a few weeks in regard to her diet and habits she will, of course, get well, and I will get the credit of curing

her, with the favorable advertising which will result."

Thinking to banter him, I said: "What did you mean by telling her that she had 'ankylosis of the liver?'" He answered: "That was to impress her with the belief that she had some fatal or nearly fatal malady—and you saw that she was most profoundly impressed! That one point is the secret of the whole business. First startle them by some terrifying big word, it makes no difference whether the word applies or has any meaning whatever—and the rest is easy, especially the fee which is the main thing. Nearly all my customers belong to the exclusive sets—highly cultivated and educated, you know! Nothing ails them as a rule except what comes from fast living, and when I am able to frighten them sufficiently to get them to live sensibly and simply, they get well in a short time, and I get the credit for performing miracles. You may call it all quackery and humbug—it is—but really what I do that is of any value is just what any regular physician will do, if he is honest.

"The difference between my practice and the regular physician is this: The physician, if he is competent and honest, will tell them the truth—that they keep too late hours, eat too rich food, indulge in late suppers, take too little exercise, etc. He will prescribe the same regimen that I do and perhaps make a charge of $2.00 for the service; but he makes no impression, and they go on entirely heedless of the doctor's advice and warning, until eventually they are taken with a fatal illness for which the doctor is more than likely blamed. When they come to me, I nearly frighten the life out of them by the use of terrifying, meaningless terms, and they become entirely tractable and gladly

pay me ten or twenty times what they reluctantly pay the regular physician and implicitly obey my instructions and get well.

"In the case which you have just witnessed, if I had told her that her liver was affected, or that her digestion was impaired, it would have made no impression, and she would have gone home and said that I do not know any more than the other doctors; but 'ankylosis' was what settled the whole business."

"But," I said, "I should think that some one would discover your trick and expose you. Ankylosis, as you doubtless know, means the growing together of two bones, and could have no possible application in the sense in which you used it."

"That does not make the slightest difference," he said. "It is a terrifying word, and, as you saw, it had the desired effect. There is no danger of exposure. The philosophy of it is this: When you use technical terms to this class of people there is an implied assumption on your part, that you are talking to an educated person, and only using language in common use with the highly educated, and while the person may be terrified, she will feel complimented and will invariably tacitly admit that she fully understands the meaning of the terms used. As in this case, she said that it was just what she had feared and expected," and the doctor indulged in immoderate laughter, and concluded with "what is the use of any knowledge of medicine, or the use of any remedy, except some simple thing for the moral effect?"

The doctor's philosophical deductions, the graciousness of the performance and the ease with which the fifty dollars changed hands, made my professional scru-

ples seem vapid and foolish, and I eagerly accepted his proposition to become assistant on the basis of 20 per cent of the gross income. The doctor announced the next morning through his advertisements that he had secured the services of "a distinguished young physician, who had spent many years studying abroad, and had come back with the highest endorsements of the most distinguished physicians of Europe." The announcement had the effect he had anticipated, and we did a very large business. I played my part to the satisfaction of my superior. Our patients were, as a rule, of the class of the one described above. Occasionally we would have one really suffering from some acute or chronic disease, and in those cases I felt a condemnation for the part I took in the fraud, that would depress me for days; but the ease with which the money came in, and the rapidity with which I was getting rich—so far beyond my wildest dreams—that my periods of stricken conscience grew shorter and shorter in duration, and finally ceased altogether—the inevitable result of continued familiarity with any crime.

Things went smoothly, our business was increasing, and I might have been there yet had it not been for the following incident: One morning a thinly-clad woman came in, and the most superficial examination disclosed the fact that she was in an advanced stage of tuberculosis. She said she had heard of the doctor's great skill, and had been advised by the lady for whom she did washing to consult him. The usual performance was gone through, and the usual remedy prepared. She asked for her bill. He said: "As I presume you are not very well off, I will only charge you

five dollars." She emptied her purse of all she had, $1.25, which she handed to him, and said she would pay the balance as soon as she was able to work and earn it.

The inhuman cruelty of both deceiving and robbing this poor woman of her last cent, which she evidently needed to buy food, aroused what manhood I had left, and I denounced him in the strongest terms, and told him I would not be a party any longer to his nefarious business, so we settled up and I left. I admit, however, that his defence was logical and had something of reason in it. He said he did not want this class of patients—none except those who could afford to pay a fair price; that if it should get out that he had prescribed for one of these poor people free, his office would be overrun with charity patients. However reasonable his logic, I could not get over the inhumanity of taking the last cent of that poor woman. Her sad face haunts me to this day.

After the first step in a downward course, how easy the next step! I had sacrificed my honor and had no intention or desire to redeem myself. The hard life of the conscientious and hard-working physician seemed tame and almost contemptible when contrasted with the easy, irresponsible money-making methods of the quack. The money came easy, in almost fabulous quantities. People who would "kick" at a physician's bill of $2.00 a visit, would pay us from $10.00 to $50.00 for "examination" and a two-ounce bottle of compound tincture of gentian, with the self-satisfied air that comes from a consciousness of superior judgment and acumen. As I had decided to enter the field of quackery, I thought it best to ally myself with different

ones most prominent in the "profession," so as to study all of its phases. I had seen the advertisement of Dr. Bessemer, the "blind physician," who "had the magic power of diagnosing, although he could not see the patient." I called at his office about the middle of the afternoon and found the waiting-room full of patients. I sent in my card requesting an interview.

The answer came back that he was unable to see me during business hours, but would I call at eight o'clock that evening? Accordingly, I called at that hour, and found the doctor in his sumptuous private office smoking a cigar before an open grate. He was a strikingly handsome man with a large intelligent head. He greeted me with that indefinable professional air which characterizes family doctors of a sympathetic nature. I entered at once on the matter in hand, telling him of my education and determination to abandon the profession and become an advertising doctor. After he had become fully convinced that I was in earnest, he gave a short sketch of his history. He was a regular physician and had practiced his profession for fifteen years, but in all that time was hardly able to get a start, and becoming discouraged, had determined to take the short cut to wealth and fame, which short cut in medicine, with rare exceptions, is only possible through quack methods. The role he decided upon was "the blind physician who can tell what ails you, although he cannot see you!"

I said: "Are you not blind?"

"No," he said, "I can see perfectly well, but as long as I had decided to sacrifice my honor, I thought I might as well go the 'whole hog.' I thought this ruse would be effectual, and experience has shown that I was

right. Of course, it was a fearful struggle to bring myself to do this, and I feel most keenly my degradation, and I could not endure it were it not for the reflection that these people who come—and they are almost invariably from the so-called intellectual and exclusive sets—are bound to be humbugged by some one, and I might as well get the benefit as any one else."

I soon arranged to go into his office, my duties to be the compounding of the prescriptions. The next morning I was on hand promptly at the opening hour. It was not long before business commenced to come in and kept up without a break until the closing hour—indeed, many were obliged to go away without their cases being attended to. The doctor's method was this: The patient was taken into the consulting room and seated by the attendant; a metal hoop was placed on her head (I use the feminine in all cases, as only women, with rare exceptions, came for treatment), to which a long cord was attached, on the other end of which was a similar hoop. The doctor was led in (as he could not see!) and seated opposite the patient, and the other hoop was placed on his head. He then directed the patient to concentrate her thoughts in herself for a few moments. After an impressive silence, he would say: "That will do," and with the assistance of the attendant, retired to prepare the medicine.

The impression given, of course, was that not only the thoughts of the person, but the nature of the disease were telepathically communicated to the doctor through the medium of the cord which connected the two hoops; all of which seemed most wonderful and impressive to the patient. The doctor had a strange faculty of changing at will the expression of his eyes

so as to simulate the expressionless, stony look so often observed in blind people, and it was this power that first suggested to him the adoption of this ruse, and being led by an attendant made the delusion complete. It is a well-known fact among medical men that a physician of a receptive mind and a keen habit of observation comes to develop the faculty of correctly diagnosing disease at the first glance of the patient. Just how he does it, he cannot tell, but it is through that subtle intuition which comes from long practice and observation. This is a habit common to people in all callings. The shoe-dealer will always direct his attention to one's footwear first. The tailor will fix a man's social and artistic status by the cut of his coat.

Even the undertaker's mind is active in his spare moments in enumerating his friends and wondering if in spite of all precedent and expert calculation they are going to live forever! And so with the observant doctor; when walking the streets he will, unconsciously, perhaps, take a mental inventory of the vital reserve of everyone he meets, and his estimate is generally correct. Dr. Bessemer had this faculty in a marked degree, and it became a most important factor in the farce in which he was stage manager and chief actor. If anything ailed the patient he gave the proper remedy, and if not, then a placebo with the assurance of a rapid restoration to health. Of course, the doctor's apparent miraculous power of determining disease by the means employed filled his patients with wonder, and his fame spread abroad, so at the time I was with him his office was crowded from morning till night, and he took more money every day than he had ever taken in a year in an honorable, legitimate practice;

so the deception he practiced he could well endure, humilitating as it was. I remained with him for a month and became very much attached to him, as he was really a most excellent and honorable man, despite the deception he was now practicing.

I next answered the advertisement of an "Indian doctor," and made application for the job. I was delighted to find that he was in want of a man with my experience and accomplishments, for the purpose as will appear. It is a curious fact, but a fact, nevertheless, that professed ignorance in the practice of medicine is quite, and with many many people more, of a recommendation than the possession of knowledge, if the ignorance is only concealed by some occult pretense; hence the success of the "Injun" doctor.

This man was about thirty-five years of age, of striking personality, especially in his makeup as an Indian. He had a dark, swarthy complexion, with very black moustache and goatee, parted his hair in the middle, and had let it grow very long; so that it hung in heavy masses down his back. I learned later that he had been a cowboy in Texas, but had conceived the idea of getting a living easier, so had turned doctor and came to the quack's Mecca. Whether he had any Indian blood in him, I do not know, but he claimed to be a full-blooded Ute Indian, and that he had been converted to Christianity, which claim, of course, gave him easy access to religious circles, and a very rapid and respectable publicity. Another effective way he had of bringing himself into public notice was this:

Once a week or so he attended some theatre. He would have his seat near the front of the parquette. and would time his entrance at the drop of the curtain

at the end of the first act; then he would walk down the aisle, dressed fantastically, his long, black hair flowing down his back. Everyone would want to know who he was, and it would soon get noised about that he was the famous Indian doctor, Dr. Massasoit (his real name was Jenkins). There would generally be some in the audience who were the subjects of or had heard of his wonderful cures, and so his spectacular entrance would result in most effective advertising.

His advertisements set forth that he did not claim to have any technical knowledge of medicine, but that he was a "Natural Doctor, by virtue of having descended through a long line of Indian Medicine Men," and, therefore, had the intuitive power of discovering disease, no matter how obscure, remote or complicated. That he had the knowledge and skill of preparing "Indian medicines," that would clear the system of every taint of disease in an incredably short time. This, however, was how it worked in practice:

The patients first came into a waiting-room, presided over by a petite and very bright young lady attendant. The one who came first, or whose turn came. was seated in a certain place, backed by a very thin screen. It is a matter of most common observation that people who are sick, or think they are—and more especially with the latter class—that there is no subject which so delights them as to discuss their various imaginary ailments and pains. Taking advantage of this fact, the lady attendant would by a few suggestive remarks start the patient off on her list of diseases. Now comes the part assigned to me. I was stationed behind the thin partition, above referred to, where I could hear every word that was said, and as soon as I

had gotten the history I would communicate with the waiting doctor, giving the salient points of what I had gathered from the conversation. Why he wanted a physician for this part was that he would be better able to sum up and put in concise form the substance of what the patient had said.

After getting this knowledge, the rest was easy. The patient was ushered into the inner office; the doctor would look at her intently for a few moments, as though divining her very thoughts, and then repeat substantially what I had told him, which corresponded in substance to her own description of her case. While the doctor was thus engaged with one patient I was behind the screen getting the history of the next. There is nothing that so impresses people with a doctor's superior insight into disease, and nothing that so flatters them as for the doctor to agree with their own opinion respecting it—a fact which is sometimes taken advantage of in regular practice. So when the doctor's diagnosis corresponds so exactly with their own opinion they became fully impressed with his wonderful powers, both to discover disease and cure it. He had but one kind of medicine, which he gave in all cases—a decoction of wormwood in very poor whisky, and the cures effected by this wonderful "Injun medicine" were really marvelous. This experience, while disgusting and humiliating in the extreme, was valuable to study some phases of human nature that would subsequently be of great value to me in my various projects to capitalize human ignorance and weakness into many paying enterprises.

I had engaged with this man for a specified time to perform a specific part, and I carried out my part of

the contract faithfully. Indeed, I became so valuable to him that he urged me to remain, and offered me an equal interest if I would do so, which was a very attractive offer, as the income was immense; but I had still a little sense of honor left which rebelled at the thought of continuing in this game of rankest deception.

My experience with these three representative men of the "quack industry" might ironically be designated as my "post graduate course in medicine," and for the practical purpose for which it became available, it was the most important of my education—a knowledge of the secret of the success of quackery. These three men, and several others with whom I became acquainted, all possessed those inherent characteristics and acquirements essential to success in this line, and they all substantially adopted the same methods. That is to say:

They were all strikingly handsome men, had cultivated the art of ease and grace of manner, had acquired the correct use of elegant language, and in addition had familiarized themselves with quite a vocabulary of technical, medicinal and scientific terms, which were discharged at random, but rarely failed to "hit the bull's eye." (Of course, I except Dr. Bessemer in this description, as he was a regular physician and well educated.' They were all closely and intimately connected with some church organization, which ally is the quack's best asset, and assures his success, if he possesses the superficial accomplishments above enumerated. This fact and the way it works in practice may best be illuminated by describing one incident, which was typical of what I witnessed in all three of the offices several times:

While in "Dr. Massasoit's" office one afternoon the attendant came in with the cards of Mrs. Van-Hamburger and several other ladies. The doctor knew what this meant, and returned the answer that he would see them as soon as he was through with a patient then in hand. After he had made the patient happy by the assurance of a long and happy life, and a bottle of his "Injun medicine," Mrs. Van-Hamburger and her five companions were ushered in. Their greetings were of a most effusive and affectionate nature, and the doctor returned the compliments with that ease and grace of which he had become a past master. Then the conversation became general—that is, they all talked at the same time, but what it was about was beyond the comprehension of man. Finally, as if by common consent, they all became silent and Mrs. Van-Hamburger had the floor. She approached the doctor and laid her white jeweled hand on his arm, and said:

"My dear doctor, I feel like a guilty creature to come to you again so soon, on an errand the nature of which you have probably guessed, but you have yourself to blame, for your subscriptions to every good cause are always so liberal—indeed, too liberal, looked at from the viewpoint of human limitations—but it is so easy to get other names after we have yours to start with, and so hard if we do not have it, that really we are at a loss to know what to do without your inspiring, bold signature—and—and the almost fabulous sums you always put down. Last week, you will remember, we were in great distress on account of the needy condition of our missionaries in darkest Africa, and your noble contribution so inspired others that we had no trouble in raising the large amount needed—and—by

the way, ladies, did you hear of the great joke on old Mr. Wilkins—the stingy old—old, I don't know what to call him.

"Well, Mrs. Trimble got the best joke on him that I have heard for a long time. You know he is very rich—they say two millions, at least—well, he is so gruff and coarse and almost insulting that none of the ladies like to go to him with a subscription paper, except Mrs. Trimble; I think she really delights to prod him—well, as I was saying, she took the paper to him that the good doctor had so liberally started with—but I don't suppose it is good form to say just how much he did give."

"Certainly not," the doctor interrupted, "the little I do in this direction, I do not do for publicity, and do not like to have it talked about, so please Mrs. Van-Hamburger, do not mention it."

"But I must," she protested, "or there will be no point to the joke; so really, dear doctor, you must indulge me just this once for the sake of the story—now do! that's a dear!"

"Well," he quoted, "if a woman will, she will, and there's an end on't," at which bright turn they all gave an approving laugh.

"Well," Mrs. Van-Hamburger continued, "you know that to get anything out of the stingy old moneybags we have to take a paper that is started with a large sum, and it so happened that Mrs. Trimble's paper was headed with Doctor Massasoit's $100.00 subscription. After many indignities she finally gained admission to the old lion's den. She explained the object of her visit, and handed him the paper. Now I ought to say that he has some sense of pride about such

matters and will always put down as much as anyone on the list. He glanced at it, took his pen and wrote some figures in a most spiteful way and handed it back. She looked at it and saw that it was $1.00, so she said, in her sweet way: "I see, Mr. Wilkins, that you have only given a dollar."

He growled out: "I gave as much as the other feller."

"No," she said, "he gave a hundred dollars, and you evidently mistook it for one dollar."

"Let me see it," he snapped, and snatched the paper from her hand, took his pen as if about to correct his mistake—then hesitated and finally threw it down and went into a rage and said:

"A dollar is enough! What do you want to send missionaries out to bother those heathen for, anyhow? They are a darned" (yes, he used that vulgar word)—"they are a darned sight better off than I am. They are not bothered with tailors' bills, and milliners' bills, and dress-makers' bills, and ice bills, and butchers' bills, and tax bills, and light bills, and insurance bills, or any other kind of bills, and they don't have a subscription paper stuck into their faces two or three times a day, or any of these darned things that make life miserable—I only wish I was one of them, and if I was I'd throw every one of your pigeon-headed missionaries into Mr. Nianzer's pond, that's what I would do!"

And he said many other horrid things, and in the most ungentlemanly way told her to leave his office. You know he was not born or brought up in Boston.

"I have heard that he came from way up in northern New Hampshire, where there are more bears than folks."

"Yes," piped up Mrs. Nimes, "if it had been me I would have told him that his folks probably made a mistake and sent a bear instead of a boy, and that the bear was a very different breed from our refined stock exchange bears, too, so there!"

At which witticism there was great hilarity. "But the joke," Mrs. Van-Hamburger resumed, "was that the old bear would have signed a hundred dollars instead of one, had he not made a mistake in reading the doctor's figures."

This caused another outburst of merriment among the ladies, but the doctor maintained the characteristic stolidity of his "race." When the ladies had exhausted their merry outburst, Mrs. Van-Hamburger said: "Why, doctor, you do not seem to laugh—perhaps you do not see the joke."

"Oh, yes, I see the joke," he said. "But I should say the joke was on you ladies rather than the old man."

"How do you make that out," they all demanded in one voice.

"Why," answered the doctor, "he saved $99 by the transaction and you are out just that sum, and it seems to me that Mr. Wilkins is the one to laugh."

At this frigid analysis they all looked cut up, until Mrs. Van-Hamburger came to the rescue with the retort, "You doctors are so very logical, analytical, didactic and all that, that it is no wonder you never laugh, for the joke is old before you get round to see it!"

But she cut short any further discussion of the subject by quickly adding:

"This conversation was getting so interesting that

I came near forgetting what we came for," and she quickly added: "Now, dear doctor, you will recollect that last week we were looking after the needs of our missionaries in darkest Africa. Now we are in quite as great stress for our mission in the Philippines. You know they have never had any real religion there—being all Catholics—until the islands came into our possession. We have got three workers there and their report is most encouraging. They have been there less than a year and a half, and we are already supporting five quite large families, all of whom were Catholics, but they have become converted and joined the Baptist Church. We must keep right on in this great work of saving the souls of these poor benighted people," and she handed her paper to the doctor.

Without any hesitation he subscribed the usual $100, for which he received the profuse and gracious thanks of the ladies. Mrs. Clarke-Smythe now approached the doctor with the sweetest and most persuasive smile, and delivered herself thus:

"I should not blame you, dear doctor, if you should begin to think that we belong to the Salvation Army, but I have an interest that is dear to my heart, and when you know what it is I am sure you would never forgive me should I neglect to give you the privilege of contributing to so good a cause. I think you know that our Home Missionary Society have a station out among your people in the Ute Reservation. Now we want to send a surprise to the children—the little dears—at Christmas-time. I have here a list of the things we want to send them, and I can see the delight of the sweet things as their black eyes rest on the Christmas trees, loaded down with all the useful and beautiful

things. This is the list that I have set my heart on sending them. I will read it: 240 pinafores, 125 dolls, 125 teething-rings, 125 rubber rattles, 125 air-guns, 125 packages fire-crackers for the 4th of July, 2 dozen boxes baby powder, 240 cornucopias filled with candy and pop-corn, and we also want to send one gross of Soothing Syrup to relieve the tired mothers; and we have not forgotten the old folks. We will send 100 kimonas for the squa-er-ladies, and 100 smoking-caps for the gentlemen. Now, doctor, if there is anything else that you think would be useful to your people, if you will mention it, we will add it to the list."

The doctor took the paper, with the remark that "a few scalping knives might be appreciated by the gentlemen," but hastily qualified the suggestion by saying, "Of course that was meant for a joke." He said: "You are certainly most kind and thoughtful to remember my people in so generous a manner, and I would certainly have felt hurt if you had slighted me in circulating this paper." And he subscribed $100, followed by another shower of compliments and thanks.

Then came the turn of Miss Juliette Campbell, a maiden lady, whose memory might revert back several decades. She said:

"Dear doctor (with emphasis on the dear), I have come also to beg, but of a different nature. I have come to beg that you do not absent yourself from Thursday evening prayer-meeting again. It seems that there is no spiritual inspiration when your voice is absent. I suppose of course you have the best of reasons when you are absent, but do try and arrange your business so that it will not happen again!"

The doctor assured her that there was nothing that

he regretted so much as to miss one of the prayer-meetings. "But," he explained, "you know a doctor's time is not his own, and when suffering calls he must always respond." This expression of so high a sense of duty evidently increased their admiration for this "great and good man," and they retired with a profusion of compliments and best wishes.

As the door closed the doctor's face took on a grimace, much resembling a corkscrew and quite in contrast with the traditional immobility of the Indian physiognomy. (I happened to be present—on the prayer-meeting night to which reference was made—at a function given by the doctor to a number of the "profession," and the "spiritual" atmosphere that pervaded the room was quite different from that of a prayer-meeting.) After the ladies had left, I said: "Doctor, how can you afford to give such large sums on every paper that comes to you?"

He said: "My dear boy, you're fresh. This is the cheapest advertising that I do. All of this money and as much more with it will be back before tomorrow night," and it was.

I have gone more into detail in describing this incident than its insignifiance would seem to warrant, but it was typical of many that I witnessed in all the offices in which I "served," and my purpose is to show the intimate and almost affectionate relation that exists between the successful quack and the religious societies into which they manage to ingratiate themselves, and without which alliance it is doubtful whether the quack doctor of the type which I have been considering could succeed.

With the knowledge gained through my "post gradu-

ate course in medicine" as recorded in the last chapter, I felt that I was prepared to successfully enter the prolific and perennial field of medical humbugs. I had not only learned the business side of it, but I had gained a deep insight into all those phases of human ignorance, weakness and credulity which makes success of the charlatan possible. Nothing in this world ever happens; whatever comes to pass, whether through the processes of Nature, or of human action, is traceable to an adequate actuating cause. Cause and effect is the everlasting, unchanging fundamental law, out of which is evolved every human condition, whether of happiness or misery. The successful exploitation of a medical campaign can be estimated with almost mathematical certainty, if the conditions on which success depends are understood. These factors primarily are fear, credulity and vanity. Fear is the primal controling force of credulity, cowardice, hypocrisy and all the attributes that contribute to the world's sum of degradation and misery.

The logical order of a popular fake medical enterprise is to first work on the fears, then the credulity and then the vanity of the people to be victimized. It is common experience among all people of whatever habit or condition to experience functional disturbances of some kind, induced by overeating, improper food, hard work under unfavorable conditions, worry, loss of sleep, exposure, lack of fresh air, want of exercise—and the thousand and one indiscretions incident to everyday life. All of these symptoms are as a rule insignificant, and readily yield to some simple remedy, or with rest and abstinence will pass off without any other remedy.

But these symptoms furnish the opportunity for the skillful quack to utilize the element fear to good effect, by magnifying each one into the forerunner of some fatal disease. The victim of a backache is warned that it signals the approach of a fatal kidney trouble, a slight disturbance of the stomach, palpitation of the heart, a cough, a headache—in short, all the little unpleasant disturbances are magnified into portents of dire calamity. After the person has been sufficiently frightened, then credulity makes him or her easy marks for a dozen bottles, more or less, of the "great discovery" as the only means of escape from pending doom. This medicine, to appeal with sufficient force to the imagination and to have the required potency, must be of the "wonderful discovery" class or of occult origin of some kind to satisfy the love for the marvelous. In this connection it is well to state that this class of vendors of cure-alls, whether they possess any knowledge of medicine or not—and it is a rare accomplishment if they do—they take the precaution to vend a harmless compound.

It is always good business policy to give it some slight medicinal activity, as slight catharsis or stimulation, so that there may be some evidence that there is "something in it." As a business proposition, eliminating all ethical and moral considerations, a mixture producing a decided exhilarating effect is doubtless the best. The most notorious one of this class has been shown by repeated analysis to be simply alcohol and water colored with burnt sugar. It has attained the largest sale of any "medicine" ever exploited in this country. It has been and is endorsed by judges, lawyers, members of Congress, ministers, bishops, and national officers of the W. C. T. U.

Notwithstanding the repeated exposure of its character, its praises continue to be sung by the same class of people, its sales are constantly increasing and its proprietor is a multi-millionaire. The dose is equivalent to a stiff glass of whiskey, and rivers of it is daily running down the throats of people who smack their lips with great satisfaction, pronouncing it the best medicine yet discovered, but who would hold up their hands and with bulging eyes denounce the degenerate fallen so low as to drink a glass of beer. The "discoverer" of this "specific" either by observation or innate acumen, or both, grasped the fact that a large proportion of good people enjoy stimulation and will indulge in it if they can take it under the disguise of a medicine, and the result shows the accuracy of his conclusions.

The vanity of people is utilized by publishing the pictures of the "saved" with their testimonials, and very few, no matter of what class or profession, rich or poor, exalted or humble, can resist the notoriety of seeing their photographs in thousands of papers, and circulated to the ends of the earth. Indeed, people who have achieved some eminence seem to be the easiest victims of this vain weakness. The truthfulness of this statement can be easily verified by a glance at the advertising columns of nearly all the daily papers and second-class magazines, any day in the year. The most efficient mediums for this class of advertising is the so-called religious press. These periodicals, with few exceptions, will eagerly take anything that is offered in the line, and in consideration of a dozen bottles of the medicine will give it editorial endorsement.

Following these basic principles, I conducted several

enterprises, but generally found it more profitable to sell when at the height of success than to continue. I desire right here to state that in this arraignment of the quack medicine business I do not include all secret so-called patent medicines—far from it—for many are honestly made, and are not misrepresented, and perform a needed service.

It is only that class which are wholly worthless, exploited by falsehood and deception, and are helped along by prominent, and probably well meaning people, but who are really accessories in a criminal business. It would be wearisome and devoid of interest should I enter into the details of these various enterprises, and as the title of the story calls for a confession, I will describe my last enterprise—the one which involved more deception, hypocrisy and assurance than all the others, and so a full confession of this should amply cover a "multitude of sins." However, I did take a species of pride in this enterprise, as it involved a combination of all the elements which contribute to successful quackery—fear, credulity, cupidity, hypocrisy, religious cant, mystery, vanity.

The scheme was worked as follows:

I go to a town and take sufficient time to familiarize myself with the condition of the various churches—which was the strongest, numbered among its membership, the most influential ladies, and to gather other data which experience had suggested. After I had accomplished this and had decided on which church to "attack," I would procure the names of some of the leading ladies and proceed to call on them. This is substantially what would take place:

Being admitted, I asked to see the lady of the house,

and at whose appearance I introduced myself substantially as follows: "You are Mrs. ——, I am Dr. Benedict. I am a recent professor in the hospital for the treatment of women and children, London. While in that position I fortunately discovered a treatment which is a specific for all those painful and dangerous complications to which women unfortunately are liable. My treatment is known under the name of Reviva. I have thought it my duty, under the guidance of a power divine, not to hide my light under a bushel, but to devote my life to disseminating this fortunate discovery for the relief of suffering humanity. I am not doing this for profit, but from a higher impulse, which I am unable to resist, and keep a clear conscience. Now I desire to bring this knowledge to the largest number of the ladies of your town possible, in a dignified and seemly manner, and the means I take—which I find most effective and satisfactory to the sufferers—is through the churches, and I invariably find the good ladies of the various churches are only too glad to help on this good work, and assist me in my mission of mercy in relieving human suffering.

"My plan is this: I shall call on several other of the leading ladies of your church, and ask them as I do you, to send out invitations to those of their immediate acquaintances, to meet me at the vestry or other convenient room in your church at two o'clock in the afternoon on (naming the date), and for every one present I will pay into the treasury of the church ten cents. I desire that the meeting be held in some room of the church for the reason that I regard the discovery of my medicine of divine inspiration, and its nature is of such immaculate purity that it would be contamination

to hold a demonstration in any secular or vulgar hall." This introduction of the subject was delivered without a pause, so that the lady did not have a chance to make any reply until I had finished, by which time she was convinced, whatever her prejudices may have been on the start. It was very rare that anyone ever offered any objection to my proposition, but, on the contrary, became enthusiastic in helping to carry out my wishes. And right here let me say that this ruse of offering a premium on the attendance was a part of the scheme, suggested by the fact that the burden of supporting the churches has to a large degree been shouldered off on to the women by their cowardly husbands, and they are obliged to resort to any and every device to raise money, and by the logic of hard necessity they do not scrutinize too deeply the means offered.

This part of the scheme satisfactorily arranged, I would go to other towns as my own advance agent, and make similar arrangements for following the date made for the first town under consideration. As this date arrived I was on hand to fulfill it at the hour appointed.

Preliminary to opening the "lecture" some one of the ladies whom I had previously met would introduce me to as many of the ladies present as time would permit. I would then call the meeting to order and open with a short prayer. I may say here, parenthetically, that I had inherited some of my father's ability as a voluble speaker, and I had so trained my voice as to give that clerical intonation which always carries conviction of the speaker's sincerity and spirituality.

As my "leeture" was "for women only," it could not properly be reproduced here, but it covered the whole field of pathology, illustrated by two anatomical

charts, one showing normal and the other morbid conditions. These charts were some that had been discarded at the medical college. They were originally alike, but with a brush and red ink I had defaced one to represent "morbid" conditions. In my lecture I brought out forcibly the joy of the condition represented by the normal chart and the horror of the opposite condition, and I impressed on my hearers the startling fact that in all probability each one present was suffering to a greater or less degree from conditions represented by chart No. 2. After this pessimistic presentation, and my hearers had become sufficiently startled and depressed, then came the psychological moment for the effectual presentation of the hope offered by my "new and infallible system of treatment." I would dwell on the wonders of my discovery, of its mysterious origin, its rarity, immaculate purity and wonderful potency to meet and combat all of the diseases which I had enumerated and magnified. This would seem to be a favorable point to reveal my "system of treatment," and the nature of my remedy. The drug was simply the old and well-known drug, Golden Seal, exhibited in three different forms—an aqueous fluid extract, an ointment made by adding a trace of the extract to petrolatum base, and a suppository made by adding a small quantity of the extract to a base of coca butter and wax. The price for a six ounce bottle of the liquid was $8.00, and the other preparations in the same ratio, giving a profit of about 2,000 per cent.

Now Golden Seal is almost entirely inert as far as any constitutional effect is concerned. It is used in practice as a mild local astringent, and possesses little value beyond this restricted use. For the purpose for

which my "system" employed it, it is practically useless. It possesses the negative virtue of being entirely harmless.

On account of its beautiful golden color and agreeable aromatic odor, Golden Seal is the cynosure of the quack. It is said to be the "bichloride of gold" of the "inebriate cures." Indeed, the demand for the drug from quack sources is so enormous that the price has become very high.

Before closing my lecture I would announce that I desired to procure the services of a proper person to act as my agent for the town, for the distribution of my remedies. The qualifications that I exacted for so important a mission were intelligence, church membership, refinement, good education, a ready and convincing talker, and one who could devote the greater part of her time to "ministering to the sick." After this announcement I closed with a short prayer and the benediction. Then the ladies would gather around me, many in great distress, saying that I had so accurately described their cases that they did not dare to delay in adopting my treatment. I generally prescribed for as many as had the money to pay for the medicine, referring the rest to my representative as soon as I had arranged this important detail.

I rarely found any difficulty in finding a suitable person to act as my agent, as the inducement was very attractive—one-half the net profits. Then I would spend the necessary time with her, giving instructions, aided by explicit and easily comprehended literature, and in few hours turn out a full-fledged "physician," capable of diagnosing and treating disease. It can be easily understood that diagnosis becomes a very sim-

ple matter when "no matter what ails 'em," only one kind of medicine is administered. My instructions to my agent were to call on everyone who was having any chronic trouble, and impress upon her the infallibility of this "new system of medicine," and also when a case came into their hands, to urge the importance of continuing the treatment for an indefinite period, thereby using a large quantity of the medicine and accumulating a large bill.

Should they decline her services, the instructions were to send me the names. Now comes the refinement of quack legerdemain. My earlier experience in the enterprise had suggested the desirability of the assistance of some of those who had been "cured" by my "system" in different parts of the country. Accordingly, I had arranged with various persons to act as my pals. This is the way it worked: On receipt of the name of a sufferer, who refused to be "cured," I would send it to one of my pals living a long distance from the person to be influenced, with instructions to write this person a personal letter. These personal letters had all been previously dictated by myself, and numbered, and the one that I desired to be used in any particular case, was designated by number. We will say, for convenience, that the patient is a resident of a town in New Hampshire, and her name is Mrs. White. I instruct my pal in Illinois to write her letter No. 4, as follows:

My Dear Mrs. White:—

I have learned through a friend of mine, living in your vicinity, that you have been ill for a long time with a peculiar disease. I say peculiar, for the description that my friend gave me of your case corresponds in every particular to the one that caused me

years of misery and despair. I was sick for nearly ten years, tried all the doctors and medicines that I could hear of, and paid out a small fortune, all to no purpose —indeed, I constantly grew worse, and had given up all hope of ever being any better, and was resignedly looking forward to the end. But thanks to my Heavenly Father, through His guidance I was led to try the Reviva treatment. I commenced to grow better in a short time, and in less than six months I was a well woman. Now if you have never heard of this treatment I implore you to find out about it, at once. No doubt there is an agent in your town for it. My sympathy goes out to you, my dear sister, for I know from my own experience what you are suffering. I have no object in writing you except a duty which I feel I have no right to neglect.

Sympathetically yours,
MRS. COLBURN.

After a few days this letter would be followed by another from a different State, of which the following is a copy:

My Dear Mrs. White:

It may seem strange that a stranger should write you, but my object will become clear as you read on. Several years ago I was stricken with a very peculiar disease, which baffled all the physicians. It was called a very strange case. I could not get any help; the doctors all said I must die; but I put my trust in the good Lord, who I was sure would in His own good time show me a way out of my misery, and He did. In a singular way I learned of the celebrated Reviva treatment,

and had faith to try it, and now in less than four months I am a perfectly well woman. You may not be aware of it, but your case has become quite celebrated, and from what I am able to learn about it, it is the same as mine. I feel so grateful for my rescue from an early grave, that I want everyone who is suffering as I did to know about this wonderful medicine. If there is no agent in your town, if you will write to me, I will tell you where and how you can obtain the treatment, as I am sure you will be a well woman in a very short time. I have no interest in this matter except that of a common humanity.

Believe me, my sister, most sincerely yours,

MRS. HUMPHRY.

If after two or three weeks my agent reported that the person was still skeptical, I would have one or two more letters, dated at other distant localities, of the same tenor, and with rare exceptions the "race was won."

It is easy to see the effect on the mind of woman, weakened by long suffering. She would feel flattered to think that her case was of sufficient importance to attract so much attention, and the assurance, coming from apparently disinterested persons, was sure to make her an easy victim. It was a matter of good business policy to obtain for my agents ladies of intelligence and high character. This I was generally able to do, but the above described, and most effective part of the scheme, I was very careful to keep from them, as it would, of course, have exposed the real character of the whole plot, and defeated the object that I was after. In justice to these ladies, I should say that I do not

think many of them ever "caught on" to the real character of the business. They were as easily fooled as the patients, and when shown the letters above referred to, they rarely doubted their genuineness. Some of the brightest ones I know did, in time, penetrate into the "mystery" of the treatment, nevertheless, I never lost an agent on this account. The impetus given by my first lecture made it very easy for a woman of tact to step into a seemingly respectable and profitable "practice." And the fact that those who did discover the true nature of the business still enthusiastically pursued it conveys an impressive lesson in psychology and confirms the old saying that all men (and women) have their price, where a profitable business is involved.

I do not think that I lay myself open to the charge of egotism when I say that in my opinion this was the "slickest" bunco medical game ever sprung on an unreasoning and gullible public.

It is doubtless the experience of every individual that his or her course in life has been determined by an unlooked for and generally trifling and insignificant incident—a journey, a chance acquaintance, a look or a word, the reading of a book, an accident, the perfidy of a friend, sickness, and a hundred other trifling events, all leading to the conclusion that it is impossible for us to formulate a scheme for a life's work and realize its fruition.

My own experience was to demonstrate the truthfulness of this postulate. I had arranged for a lecture" in the moderately large city of M—— in the State of New York, and had gone through the usual process of procuring an audience. I had arranged to give my lecture under the auspices of the leading and most aristo-

cratic church of the city, which I looked upon as a stroke of exceptional good luck. When I entered the lecture-room, no one came to greet me, as was usual, although, to my astonishment, the house was crowded. As I glanced over the audience, I discovered that it was made up of a very different class from that which I generally addressed. It was composed of ladies evidently of the wealthy classes, all well dressed and intelligent, and I instinctively had a feeling that the brazen effrontery, which I usually conducted these performances would be out of place, and perhaps resented here; but I summoned to my aid all the assurance that these years of deceit and humbuggery had developed, and gave my "potpouri" of grotesque platitudes and polished falsehoods.

It had been my custom at the close of my "lectures," and before the last prayer, to invite all who desired to do so, to ask me questions, expecting, of course, that such questions would have reference to the matter under discussion, but something told me not to extend this privilege to the present audience. I had assumed the attitude of prayer when a young lady arose and in a very gracious manner begged the privilege of asking some questions. Her graceful pose, remarkable beauty, strong, intelligent face, and the emphatic intonation of her voice, combined to give me a premonition that her motive was not to gain information, but rather to discomfit me. My first impulse was to refuse, but realizing the compromising effect of such a course, I hesitatingly said that I should be pleased to answer any questions relating to my subject. I soon had cause to regret that I had not carried out my first impulse. Her first question was:

"You have stated that your knowledge of this medicine came to you as a divine inspiration. Now, I would like to ask you how you know that to be a fact?"

I was much taken back by this question, and the attitude of the questioner, but I managed to stammer this lame answer, suggested, no doubt, by my early religious environment:

"Inspiration is so subtle and elusive a thing, that it would be hard to make a specific answer to your question. It is something that comes to us in our subconscious moments."

"Now," she said, "to be more specific, if this came to you by inspiration, of course you must have had direct oral communication with its source; to be told where to get this drug, how to prepare it, the names of the diseases for which it is a specific, and all the data necessary for its successful exploitation. If this is all so, as you claim, then you must be the most favored man the world has known since Moses, and must be in a position to discover many of the great secrets of nature, life and the universe that have puzzled and baffled mankind from the infancy of the race up to the present time."

The manner in which this was said showed her to be master of the situation, and after a few minutes of the most distressing and embarrassing hesitation I managed to say that this was a question too much involved to admit of an answer off hand, and I must decline it.

"Well, then," she said, "I will ask you an easier one: Is not this very rare, mysterious and subtle remedy of yours, the simple old common drug, Golden Seal?"

I readily replied: "You can hardly expect that trade secrets should be divulged, and it is hardly fair to ask such a question."

Then she said: "Assuming that it is Golden Seal, let me ask you how you know that it possesses the specific properties that you claim for it—that it acts specifically on every organ to eliminate disease. Is it not rather true that it is totally inert as a constitutional remedy, and that its only value lies in its slight astringent properties when applied to inflamed surfaces?"

I was obliged to admit that such was true of that drug, but asserted that she had no right to assume that my remedy was Golden Seal. This answer was my undoing. She seemed to grow an inch or two taller, a deep flush overspread her beautiful face, a blaze shot from her great lustrous eyes. An ominous hush had fallen on the audience, which was at last broken by my tormentor. In measured tones which indicated a deliberate purpose she said:

"Doctor Dobson, for such I know your name to be, these ladies assembled here, not to give any attention to your so-called lecture, but I have assembled them to hear a lecture that I propose to give to you. I know more about you than you are probably aware. You were here a year ago and introduced your fraudulent scheme through the assistance of one of the churches, in the manner which you have attempted here to-night. According to your plan you secured an agent, and from the great number of victims she has been able to swindle, I assume it has been very profitable to you. I procured a bottle of your 'divine' remedy, at the time, and subjected it to analysis, and discovered it to be an aqueous fluid extract of Golden Seal, a com-

mon article that can be obtained at any drug store, and I have learned that you obtain your supplies from a local drug store in every town or city which you invade. I paid eight dollars for a six-ounce bottle of your medicine, which I understand is the regular price paid by your victims. The same quantity of this drug can be bought at any drug store for seventy-five cents. By your hypocritical religious pretense through which you are enabled to prosecute your swindling schemes through the various churches, and to carry out your pretense of sanctity, you make your vulgar 'lecture' a sort of religious rite. You are not so much to be blamed, perhaps, as long as you are enabled to accomplish your ends by such means, as possibly it is no worse than many other fraudulent schemes for robbing the ignorant and helpless. The greater condemnation is on the church societies that, for the little pittance which you offer as a bait for the collection of an audience, are willing to stultify themselves and bring reproach on the very name of religion; and under the burden of helpless gullibility and pitiable cupidity are unable to anticipate the wrong and misery which is inevitable as a result of their part in the swindle.

"There is one more count in this indictment which I have kept for the last, as it is the culmination of all the iniquities of quack methods. It is this: In order to leave no loophole through which your prospective victims might escape, you have caused letters to be written to the more reluctant ones, from different parts of the country. These letters purport to come from women entirely disinterested, 'who have been given up by all the doctors,' to once more quote from your literature, and who have been cured by a timely use of your treat-

ment. These letters have been dictated by yourself, ingeniously worded with a mixture of sympathetic interest and religious cant. They are mailed as you direct by your pals. Few stand out after receiving these seemingly humane appeals. One can hardly help admiring the ability that can put in successful operation so ingenious a scheme. But the pity of it is that such talent should be prostituted to such base purposes when so many high and honorable openings are demanding just that kind of ability.

"My object in this exposure is not primarily for the purpose of punishing you, richly as you and all other quacks deserve the severest condemnation and a place behind the bars of our penal institutions, but my object is to protect the ignorant and helpless from your swindling operations. So many cases have been brought to my attention of poor, sick, helpless women, sacrificing their last penny which they sorely needed for the purchase of food and clothing for your worthless, although 'divine' medicine, through the representation of your representative, in this city, that 'health, vigor and happiness,' to use the language of your literature, awaited them if they would 'follow up a vigorous course of treatment,' to again quote from that same inspiring source, that I have determined to devote a part of my time and energies to doing real missionary work—the only effective kind—of laboring with those about me, that I may protect them from the ghouls that are ever hovering around them to rob them of their meager pittances; and I am quite sure that this exposure, through these ladies, will result in eliminating one fraud from this quack-ridden city, and possibly this salutary lesson may result in making other members of

your gang less arrogant and persistent. Now I will save you the trouble of closing this meeting in your usual form, with prayer and benediction—taking the liberty of dismissing it myself."

As the real meaning of this unusual and unlooked for procedure commenced to dawn upon me, cold chills ran down my back, a stupor gradually took possession of me, my brain ceased to act, and it all seemed to assume the unreal grotesque indefiniteness of a troubled dream. As in a dream I had no volition; I could not articulate or move a muscle. That beautiful woman standing there before me, as an avenging angel, seemed to read all my thoughts and a record of all my sins, and I somehow vaguely expected the dread sentence: "Depart from me, ye cursed," as she seemed something not of this earth.

As the ladies were filing out, consciousness commenced to return, but I stood there like one petrified. I could not move, my eyes were set, gazing into space. After all were gone, and I was left to myself, I managed to get my senses together sufficiently to know that I must go somewhere out of there. I looked around at my "anatomical charts" and stock of medicine, and their very sight filled me with such loathing and disgust that I turned and fled, leaving them behind, as though they were the evidence of a great crime. I directed my steps toward my hotel, feeling that there was a great "scarlet letter" on my breast, and everyone I met was reading *Quack*.

My brisk walk in the crisp air restored me sufficiently to realize what had happened. I went to my room, locked my door, threw myself on the bed and lapsed into a semi-conscious state, bordering on a total men-

tal collapse. I closed my eyes and was again standing before that beautiful inquisitor. I saw, as through a mist, my victims of years of quackery passing before me in endless procession, and in the center of the panorama stood out in angelic radiance my tormentor. The picture was all horrifying, still I wanted the vision to last. My gaze became transfixed on that beautiful being, and gradually I felt the horror of the apparition giving place to a restful satisfaction. New life and hope gradually filled my soul, and as the vision departed, I jumped from the bed with an exaltation that seemed a recreation. I almost shouted in my ecstasy of a determination to live, and to efface my criminal record by the restoration and consecration of all my perverted powers.

Wishing to get away from all who knew me, I hastily packed my grip, went to the office and settled my bill. I went to a suburban hotel and registered in my real name—James Dobson, M. D., of Boston, Mass. I requested that I be assigned to a room as remote from noise as possible, on the plea that I was engaged in writing, and required the utmost quiet. I was given a room that was all that I desired. That night I did not sleep much. The events of the previous day were constantly passing before me, and every kaleidoscopic change only strengthened my determination to atone for the past as far as lay in my power, and try to be a Man. The next morning I expected to see an account of the affair in all the city papers, but I looked in vain until I came to one with about four columns of quack advertising to one of reading matter and having for its motto:

"For God, Temperance and the Home," .

with this characteristic account of the episode, with prominent and startling headlines on the front page:

"AN OUTRAGE!"

"The justly famed Dr. Benedict, of England, while on his annual tour through the United States, had arranged for a lecture in the Olive Street Church, yesterday afternoon. He had delivered his impressive and illuminating lecture, and was about to close, when a woman arose and asked permission to ask some questions, which the genial doctor readily granted. She commenced by asking him some very impertinent questions, which he very properly declined to answer. She then commenced a tirade of abuse, which was simply disgraceful. The doctor felt so outraged and insulted that he gave up the clinic that he usually holds after his lecture. The lady who took it upon herself to insult 'a stranger within our gates,' we understand, was a Miss Hamilton, daughter of Dr. Hamilton, a well-known physician of this city. What the lady's motive was, it is not for us to say or suggest, but we are credibly informed that this new and wonderful system of treatment of Dr. Benedict's was making frightful inroads into the practice of Dr. Hamilton by curing many of his patients. We do not say that this had anything to do with the insane action of his daughter, we simply state the facts as we understand them, and people can draw their own conclusions."

Under other circumstances, and had I possessed the hardihood characteristic of the quack fraternity at large, I should have regarded this article as a piece of great good fortune, and should have made use of it to my own advantage, and to Dr. Hamilton's injury. But as it was, I threw the paper from me in disgust, for I

knew her arraignment of me was just, that every word she had spoken was true, and I could not doubt that she acted from the purest motives.

For several days I wandered about the hotel and residence streets with no definite purpose, and forming no plans for the future. One definite conclusion I did reach, however, and that was to abandon the nefarious business forever. No money could have induced me to go before another audience and rehearse that disgusting string of lies, mingled with that revolting religious cant. I had a circular printed and mailed to all my "agents" informing them that I had concluded to abandon the business, directing them to keep what money they had, and not to collect any more from their patients.

The picture of Miss Hamilton was ever before me; it seemed to be photographed into the substance of my brain. It did not terrify me now, but filled me with a longing and an unrest that I had never experienced before. Cupid had given me a wide berth up to this time. If I had thought of marriage at all it was as of something for the distant future—when I should meet my ideal, perhaps. My association with women had made me a cynic. I thought them all alike. I determined several times to leave the city on the following day, but when the day came I found it impossible to do so. Finally I determined, come what might, that I would see Miss Hamilton and make a full confession to her. I found Dr. Hamilton's address in the city directory, and after writing and tearing up several notes, I finally decided upon and sent the following:

Miss Hamilton:

You will doubtless be surprised to receive a letter

from the quack doctor whom you so justly and effectively flayed a few days since. What you said was true, and only what I knew too well myself, but our sins do not seem as scarlet until they have found us out. I have fully determined to abandon the business, and to redeem myself, if possible. My object in writing to you is to ask a favor, and in doing so I realize that I run the risk of incurring your greater displeasure. I should feel better the rest of my life, could I see you and make a full confession of my crime. You know when we are overburdened with a sense of our sins, it is a great relief to unburden ourselves to some one. As you are my accuser you are the only one in the world who could appreciate or understand what I have to say. So what I have to ask is that you grant me an interview at any time or place that may best suit your convenience.

With great consideration,

Most sincerely yours,

JAMES DOBSON, M. D.

That afternoon I received a delicate missive at the hands of a messenger. It read as follows:

Doctor Dobson:

I can see no valid reason for refusing your request, and if you so desire, you can call at my father's house at 7:30 o'clock this evening, and I will see you in the presence of my parents.

MISS HAMILTON.

As cold and informal as this letter was it filled me with ecstasy at the thought of meeting her face to face,

but it must be admitted that the feeling was somewhat tempered by the thought of the embarrassing circumsances under which the interview was to take place. I had previously acquainted myself with the street and number. I reached the house at the moment appointed; but instead of stopping I was seized with that uncontrollable terror that the bashful boy so generally feels when making his first call on the object of his adoration and, like him, I walked hurriedly past, but retraced my steps as soon as I could get control of myself. This time I went boldly up to the door, and with a trembling hand rang the bell. A servant conducted me to the sumptuous parlor, and I sent my card to Miss Hamilton. Presently I heard the approach of footsteps, and there stood before me my persecutor, my ideal, in all her radiant beauty, more entrancing than had appeared to my fevered imagination. I stood spellbound; I was stupified. Seeing my embarrassment, she came forward like the perfectly bred woman that she was, extended her hand, and said:

"Doctor Dobson, I believe."

This reassurance relieved my embarrassment sufficiently to enable me to blurt out some excuse, probably entirely different from what I had intended to say, but what it was I could not have told the next moment. She introduced me to her father and mother, who invited me to be seated, and the conversation which became general, soon put me at ease. During the conversation I accidentally referred to my graduation from Harvard University, at which Dr. Hamilton said: "Now, doctor, will you explain to me how it became possible for you with your education, opportunities and mental equipment for an honorable and successful ca-

reer to engage in the disreputable business that you acknowledge you have been engaged in?" I gave the explanation in substance as already recorded in a previous chapter—of the inevitable trials and hardships, for many years, before I could hope for recognition or emoluments, and of the sure, quick and easy way through the course I had adopted.

Miss Hamilton had taken no part in the conversation up to this point, but now an ominous color came into her face, and a flash into her eyes, and she said in tones which seemed to imply sorrow rather than resentment: "Doctor, do you think your course was the heroic one? From what you say this would seem to be the synthesis of the whole matter: Rather than undergo the hardships and discipline which is the price of all success in this world, that is of any value, you choose the easy road, involving the disgrace of an honorable profession, the sacrifice of your own manhood, and the greatest offence of all, the robbing of thousands of innocent and confiding people, into whose lives you brought untold misery. A man may possibly have the right to stultify himself as long as it does not interfere with the rights of others, but when it involves as much as it did in your case, it is hard to see any extenuating conditions."

The silence which followed was painful in the extreme. Miss Hamilton attempted to relieve it by introducing some general subject, but to no purpose, and I soon took an awkward leave, thanking them for the privilege of calling and expressing the hope that I had not exceeded the bounds of propriety in asking it. I did not receive any encouraging assurance on this point or an invitation to call again. As I passed out into the

street I felt that I had indeed "left hope behind." I walked the streets for hours in a semi-conscious state, seeing or realizing nothing but the impassable gulf that stood between me and happiness, or, indeed, any motive for living. Had I been a hypochondriac I should have ended it all in the coward's only recourse, suicide.

It was nearly daylight when I reached my room; I threw myself into a chair and tried to think, but all thought converged into the antithesis of that exalted character and my own degradation, and that made more repulsive by her caustic analysis of my character and motives. I thought the picture of her as she appeared at the 'inquisitorial arraignment' was sufficiently enchanting, but now that I had seen her face to face, at her home, the picture assumed the composite of every thing beautiful and lovable in woman.

I had not slept or eaten much since that eventful day, and I now realized that I must sleep or my mind would give way. I therefore rang for a servant, and explained that I had not slept for several days, that I wanted a long sleep and did not wish to be disturbed until the next morning. I undressed, took a large dose of morphine and got into bed.

When I awoke the sun was shining brightly into my room, and looking at my watch I found it was past eight o'clock; I had slept more than twenty-four hours. I felt refreshed, except for a mawkish langor that a large dose of morphine induces. I ate a hearty breakfast and after a brisk walk I felt much refreshed. During my walk I had decided to leave the city forever. I went to my room, packed my grip and started downstairs to settle my hotel bill, but turned back and sat

down to think it over again, with the result of a determination to remain, and if possible see Miss Hamilton again, and to lay bare my whole life, and pour out my soul at her feet. I reasoned that perhaps she had a woman's heart that could be touched with pity, to say the least.

During my call at her father's house I learned that she was a professor of philosophy and chemistry in one of the public schools of the city. I felt that perhaps it might not be offensive if I requested the privilege of visiting her school during one of her lectures on chemistry. I therefore wrote her, craving the privilege on the plea that I was much interested in chemistry, and if she did not object to my presence, it would afford me much pleasure to listen to her lecture. In reply I received a note, saying that her lecture was at three o'clock in the afternoon, and as the school was public, anyone who chose had the right to attend any of the sessions. As distant and forbidding as this note was, I saw in it a gleam of hope—at least, it would afford me the opportunity to see her again.

At the appointed time I was on hand, and was shown into the lecture room just as her lecture had commenced —whether she noticed me I did not know, and at any rate she gave no sign of recognition. Her subject, by the greatest good fortune, was the one that had been my thesis while in college, and so I was perfectly familiar with it. During the lecture I discovered some minor errors which suggested to me the determination to remain until her class had retired, and then approach her with the ostensible purpose of pointing out the errors, but my real motive was the possibility of gaining her respect, if only in the slightest degree.

Accordingly I approached her desk. She greeted me very formally. I opened the conversation by expressing my pleasure and interest in her lecture, and said it had particularly interested me, having been my thesis while in college. She asked if I had discovered any errors during the lecture. I replied that I had noticed some slight ones in some of her equations, at least they differed from the results that I had obtained. This led to quite a long discussion, and to convince her that I was right, I went to the blackboard and worked out the various problems under discussion. I did this with a dexterity and an accuracy for which I had been noted at college, and when I had finished she acknowledged that I was correct, and seemed much pleased that I had called attention to her errors. This naturally led to other matters, and I could see that my familiarity with the science of chemistry interested and pleased her. Our interview lasted a half hour when she suddenly brought it to a close by saying that she must hurry home, that her people would not know what had become of her. I begged the privilege of walking with her to her home, to which she did not object, and the conversation was continued on the subject which we had under consideration at the lecture room. The distance was nearly a mile, and walking slowly I had time to lead her into several subjects, as philosiphy, art, literature, music, etc. This I did intentionally, for the purpose of showing her that I was not the illiterate, vulgar person typical of the "profession."

Before reaching her door I had determined on some decisive action, so I said: "Miss Hamilton, I have good reason to know what your opinion is of me, but no one is entirely bad, and perhaps if you could know all the

temptations and trials that have beset me your harsh opinion might be somewhat softened. As you already know, I have decided to give up this business which you so frankly and truthfully characterized, and that decision has afforded me more happiness than I have experienced for years, but that happiness has been many times neutralized by my knowledge of your opinion of me. Now am I asking too much if I appeal to your generosity to lay my whole life before you, so that you may judge whether there are any modifying circumstances?"

She replied that she could not see how her opinion could be of any consequence to me. I answered:

"I have seen so much of the world that I have learned ordinarily to be little impressed with people's snap opinions of me, but you are different from the ordinary; your high character and superior intelligence makes indifference to your favorable opinion an impossibility to anyone not wholly lost to all the instincts of honor and manhood. To me it means more than you can realize, for as it seems to me now, if I am to go through life with your expressed contemptuous attitude ever before me, it will be a shadow that will obscure what little good there may be left in me."

"Well," she finally said, "there is not the slightest reason in the world why you should confess to me, and I will say frankly that it would be extremely distasteful, but if it is to make any difference in your effort to redeem yourself, I suppose I should make the sacrifice, however disagreeable, so you may call at the house tomorrow evening at eight o'clock. Good night." She ran up the steps and was out of sight before I had time to thank her.

I went home with a light heart. I slept soundly that night without any other sedative than the recollection of that delightful afternoon and what it might mean to me. The next day I spent in formulating what I should say at the coming interview. I desired to have it absolutely truthful and complete, for the very thought of deceiving her was repulsive. As I have before intimated, I think I was endowed with more than ordinary ability as a conversationalist, and by habit and training had also acquired a correct use of language, so I was sure of being able to tell my story effectively. I had also inherited my mother's keen sense of humor, and had the reputation of describing humorous situations to good effect; and I believe I owe everything to that "saving grace." Appeal to one's humorous side, and if you can evoke a hearty laugh, no matter what the controversy, half the battle is won.

I was at the Hamilton door as the clock was striking eight. I was shown into the same parlor as before, and soon Miss Hamilton entered more radiantly beautiful, it seemed to me, than ever. She apologized for the absence of her parents, as she said she was unaware of a previous engagement for that evening. I fear I did not fully disguise my satisfaction at this unexpected fortunate turn in affairs. After some commonplaces I entered into the sketch of my life. I went back to my boyhood and described the pathetic struggles of my mother with poverty and a lazy husband; I related many of the comical incidents of which I was a spectator. I gave in all its details father's experiment with his "great medical discovery," at which the whole house echoed with her screams of laughter, and it seemed to me the most musical and contagious laugh

that I had ever heard, showing that with all her other great qualities she possessed in the largest degree that one without which a man or woman has a one-sided development—an appreciation of the humorous side of life.

I briefly went over my history as has been recorded in previous chapters of this book, not sparing myself in the least or making any apology for my misdeeds. After I had completed this recital, I continued, before she had a chance to speak:

"I have decided on my course. I shall start for Europe at once to take a post-graduate course in medicine. I have not yet decided on the university that I shall select, but will leave that to the turn of events when I arrive. I shall not return until I have perfected myself in my profession, and have made myself worthy of the highest honors. As I may never see you again I am going to make another confession, and one which I know may again incur your displeasure, if not your hatred, but I shall feel better for having made it, whatever the result. That confession is: I Love You! I love you with an intensity amounting almost to madness.

"I know how utterly hopeless it is, I appreciate fully the impassable gulf that separates your exalted personality from my deprvity, but you are my ideal, and the only woman whom I have ever met who could excite the divine passion, love, which I had almost believed was dead within me, but which you have brought back to life with an intensity which knows no bounds. I do not ask you for an answer, for I know what that would be; all I ask is your forgiveness for this insane confession, and if I might have the assurance that I

could call you ' friend,' it will be a great inspiration in my effort to redeem myself."

When I had stopped speaking she said, without excitement or resentment, in her usual measured tones: "I, too, am in love—with my profession, and whether I have a place for any other love, I do not know, and never shall know until I meet my ideal. From what I *do* know of you, *you* certainly are not my ideal, and, on the other hand, I do not know enough about you to guess whether you possess those elements that might develop into my ideal. However, if my friendship will be of any help to you in your effort to expiate your crime, it is freely bestowed; but if you regard my friendship do not again mention that impossible subject. This interview is now closed." She extended her hand and expressed the hope that I might realize all that my new resolution anticipated.

As I gained the street it seemed that a new world had been created; every object seemed to glow with a mellow peacefulness, and the trees seemed to nod a glad recognition of my exaltation. A less optimistic person might have been depressed and discouraged by her relentless logic and decision in response to my impassioned appeal, but the fact that she did not repulse me, and gladly proffered her friendship, filled me with ecstasy. I walked on air to my room. I sat for a long time, living over that scene and recalling every word she said, and I repeated over and over again, "When I meet my ideal," "For what I do know of you, you are not my ideal, and, on the other hand, I do not know enough about you to guess whether you possess those elements that might develop into my ideal." Was there a disguised intimation that she saw such a possibility

in me? I repeated it over and over until it took possession of my whole being, and my hopeful nature accepted the interpretation which inspired me with a joy that I had never before felt. Those words, "when I meet my ideal," were being engraved into my very soul.

I would materialize them into a living, breathing, holy personality, which should be my talisman, my inspiration, never to be absent from my person for one moment. It should inspire me to the consecration of my whole being to reach that ideal. With this conclusion came the uncontrollable impulse to get to work immediately. Accordingly I packed my grip in feverish haste, settled my bill and took the midnight train for my mother's home for a short visit before taking up my work of regeneration.

My mother was surprised to see me, and when I told her of my reformation, and how it came about, she could see a humorous side to it, but the tears came in her thankfulness that I had at last abandoned that disreputable business. I described the beauty and goodness of the author of my changed purpose, and went over all the details of those days of suffering, of my undying love for her, and the almost invisible thread on which my hopes hung; of my determination to make myself worthy of her, if such a thing were possible.

Her great mother's heart was touched by my story and she heartily commended my course, and said her prayers would ascend every day for my success and final happiness. She at once set about making those little preparations for my comfort that only a mother knows how to make, and as a vessel was to sail the next day, I took a night train for Boston, and was soon on my way across the water.

On arrival in Europe I settled on Heidelburg University for the prosecution of my studies. As soon as I was settled I wrote Miss Hamilton, giving her my address. I hardly looked for a reply, as there was no reason why she should write me, and none came. It would be monotonous to record the events at the college during this year. Suffice it to say that my talisman, "when I meet my ideal," was an ever-present inspiration to spur me on to greater effort and higher ideals. I had studied German while in college, and now being associated with German people, and hearing only that language, I soon became proficient in the use of the language. When all the examinations were over, I was much gratified to find that I had been marked 100 in every department, and had received the highest honors the university could bestow on a student.

In the glow of my transport I wrote Miss Hamilton, giving a brief account of my year's work and of the satisfactory results. I closed by saying that there was much more to be learned, and that before returning to America I should spend the next six months in the clinics of the various European cities. I gave my address for the next few weeks as Paris, but did not ask her to answer my letter, as I knew it would make no difference, since she would use her own judgment and inclination. In about two weeks my joy may be imagined, when I received a letter in a well-known feminine hand. I rushed to my room and tore it open. It read as follows:

Dr. James Dobson.

Dear Sir:—I received your letter and congratulate you on the success of your year's work. The only

thing I can think of to write about is my great sorrow. About a month ago my father was killed in an automobile accident and my mother seriously injured. I escaped unhurt. Under the circumstances, it is a shock to be compelled to refer to business, but it seems necessary. Father had a very large practice. His office is equipped with a large library and every appliance for large practice. We have had many applications for the office and good will of the practice, but we are very anxious that it pass into the hands of some one who can in a measure, at least, fill father's place. It has occurred to us that with your training it is possible that you might meet our requirements. If you express a desire for it, we will keep the place open for you.

Awaiting your pleasure,

I remain your friend,

GRACE HAMILTON.

I read and reread the letter. It seemed unreal. I looked in the glass to be sure of my identity. I pinched myself to make sure I was awake. Then again I thought it must be a delightful dream, and I was afraid to stir lest I awake and it all vanish. When I finally came to fully realize that it was real, and that I held in my hands what was no less than an invitation to return to her, a great wave of happiness convulsed me. I felt the rapture that the redeemed must feel when they hear the glad acclaim, "well done." Happiness such as had now come to me is never complete. There came the shadow of her grief, and perhaps this was well, for such bliss as mine would kill unless minimized in some way. Before I retired that night I wrote to her, ex-

pressing my sympathy for her great loss, and thanking her for her generosity in offering me her father's office, and added that while I could not hope to fill his place, yet if devotion to my profession could avail I should hope not to bring reproach on his memory. I also said that I could not relinquish my plan to visit the clinics of the different European capitals, for I realized that I had much to learn.

The following six months was a time of the most concentrated effort. I carried out the program as I had planned with satisfactory results, and returned to the home of my mother for a short visit, and then to the city of M——. I arrived late in the afternoon, and as soon as I could put myself into presentable condition I hastened to call at the Hamilton residence. As Miss Hamilton came forward to greet me I think the surprise was mutual. A year and a half had changed us both. She had grown more mature and her great sorrow had given a subdued tone to her beauty and bearing which made her more attractive than ever; and I have no doubt that the severe mental discipline that I had received had improved my personal appearance somewhat. She greeted me with the most cordial friendship, as did her mother, who had now nearly recovered from her accident. I was invited to remain to tea, which invitation I gladly accepted. The conversation naturally turned upon my experience while abroad. I found to my delight that Mrs. Hamilton was of German birth, and that she, as well as her daughter, spoke the German language with fluency. So the conversation was carried on in that language, much to our satisfaction. As I took my departure it was arranged that I should come the next morning to look over the business

situation. As I have used up most of my stock of adjectives in this chapter in describing my misery and happiness, I will not attempt to describe my feelings as I returned to my hotel, but perhaps the reader can form some conception.

The next morning I was shown into Dr. Hamilton's vacant office, and was both surprised and delighted at its elegant and complete equipment. The proposition of the ladies was very simple. It was that I might take the office for a year and if at the end of that time all parties were satisfied, then more permanent arrangements could be entered into. The next day I was duly installed in the office and the proper announcement made through the daily papers. Very soon I had all the practice I could attend to. One of the first things I did was to inaugurate a plan which I had decided upon when I knew I was to return to this city to practice my profession. This was to hunt up my former "agent" and procure from her a list of all her patients —or, to be more exact, her victims—and to make restitution to them to the extent, at least, of furnishing professional medical service free of cost. And right here I will say that I carried out this plan faithfully. I had of course to use great tact so that they would not think it was charity nor conscience service. When I was called to one of them, whom I had wronged, I gave them my undivided attention, and in a large number of cases afforded the needy much material assistance. Whenever they asked for their bill I put them off with the plea that I was busy, and requested them not to worry about it until I called for it. I confided my plan to Miss Hamilton and received her most cordial approval.

As time went by my business became almost burdensome with its volume, yet I found time to spend some part of each day with the object of my adoration, either in riding, walking or at her house. These interviews were most delightful, with conversation appertaining to subjects in which we were mutually interested. But every time I attempted to approach the one subject nearest my heart she was instantly off on another tangent. She had given up her professorship on the death of her father and now had the care of the house. As an example of her great store of common sense and perfect womanhood, this incident may be given as an illustration of her philosophical acceptance of their changed situation. She said one day, when reference was made to the subject:

"I have no doubt of the correctness of the view that I had always held, that woman's true and normal sphere is in the management of her house, and those who are obliged to seek other means of a livelihood are the abnormal, and must be classed among the unfortunates. I find my knowledge of chemistry of great advantage in cooking, for good cooking demands the application of exact chemical processes, which are equally as interesting as laboratory demonstrations and frequently of vastly more importance."

The evening of the day on which my probation expired, I met Miss Hamilton by appointment, at her house. When the conversation had taken the right turn I said:

"Miss Hamilton, the time for which I took the office and practice of your father expired today. You said when the contract was made that at the expiration of the time, if all parties were satisfied, other arrange-

ments could be made. Whether my professional career has met your expectations and approval I do not know, but I may at least make the plea that I have done my best. Now in making any new arrangements there is one item of vastly more moment to me than all else; indeed, it is the only one of vital importance. Two and a half years ago tonight I stood before you in this place a condemned criminal, with you and my own conscience as judges. I had the temerity to confess my love for you. I did not expect its return, and the fact that you did not repulse me, but instead proffered your friendship, filled me with hope, and a new life opened before me. What you said about your ideal burned itself into my very soul and was my constant inspiration for my every effort. I did not expect to become your ideal—your ideal is the impossible, it is placed too high. What I accomplished you are familiar with; what I am you know. My declaration of love of that night I now renew ten thousand times intensified, for then it might have been a passing fancy, but now after knowing you as I do, my love is my whole being—my whole soul."

As I spoke those impassioned words I could see the color heighten in her face, and the moisture come into her beautiful eyes. She replied in a trembling voice: "From the time you first heard me speak till now, I am sure you have had good reason to believe in my entire frankness, and I shall speak just as plainly now. You *are* my ideal and I love you with all the intensity of my nature." Here let the curtain drop and shut out the world, for what followed is too sacred for eyes to see or ears to hear.

Our marriage was arranged to take place four weeks from that date, and like the sensible girl she was, she

did not want any ostentation or show, but a private wedding, in her home, with only a few intimate friends present.

My father had died, the family were all grown up and well settled in life, so I decided to have my mother come and live with us as soon as we were settled, and particularly to have her at the wedding. So I went to her home, settled her affairs and brought her back with me.

Our marriage took place as planned, and we made an extensive tour of Europe. On our return we settled down in the Hamilton mansion. My mother had a suite of rooms with every appointment for comfort, and her every wish was and is anticipated. She is perfectly happy and often says: "Were it not for the evidence of squalor, wickedness and selfishness to be seen on every hand, the illusion that this is Heaven would be hard to dispel." Poor, dear mother! her sufferings, privations and the heroic way in which she bore them, entitles her to the very best the earth affords for the remainder of her days.

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Tonight is the fourth anniversary of our marriage, and I have just finshed reading this last chapter of my story to my wife. When I had finished she threw her arms around my neck and between her sobs said: "How mysterious, subtle and often cruel are the agencies which determine our destinies." Little "Doctor Dobson," as we call him, looked up from his play with an expression of surprise in his great blue eyes, and said: "Mama, what 'ou quin' about?"

THE END.

SHORT STORIES

An Amateur Minstrel Show

In a certain town in a certain State which can probably boast of a greater number of secret societies than any other town in the country, may also reasonably boast of one among that number, which for beneficence, helpfulness, active usefulness and perpetual inspiration probably takes the lead. This is a female organization primarily, and is known under the mystical designation of the O. E. S. As has been said, it is a ladies' society, but men are permitted to join—if they can get in—but through the multifarious motives which govern female action, the black-ball has become the terror of all male aspirants to membership in the order. A few men, by some mysterious process of fate, have managed to get in, much to the chagrin of those less fortunate. It has been maliciously hinted by some of these envious ones that these exceptions to the rule have come about by the black-balls in some unaccountable manner disappearing from the box on the night of balloting—and some color is given this suspicion by the varicolored personalities who in some way penetrate into these sacred precincts. But of course such an intimation is a vile and most unjust slander on the unimpeachable integrity of this most reputable institution.

This is how it works out: The application of a man is regularly presented and properly avouched for; unfortunately his wife appeared at church the previous Sunday with an exasperating new gown and a hat that

lacerated the hearts of all who saw it, and this is the first opportunity to give adequate expression to just resentment, and consequently there is added to the stupor into which the milliners' bill had precipitated the poor man the humiliation of the rejection of his application.

His wife does not know or appreciate the justice of this action, and of course resents the indignity, and a resolution of dark and sinister purpose is at once taken, which manifests itself when the next luckless individual presents an application for admission, whose wife in turns takes a similar resolution, and so it may be readily realized that the most mysterious thing about this secret society is how any man ever gets in.

All the offices are filled by women, with the exception of a minor insignificant, humiliating one which is grudgingly given to the man who has the fewest enemies. Ostensibly his duties are to "give advice" to the presiding officer, but history does not record an instance when his advice has been asked, and when he has the temerity to venture it the opposite course is invariably taken. So during the time that he is supposed to keep a watchful eye on the proceedings, ready at the first lapse from ritualistic decorum to interpose with gentle admonition or withering sarcasm—instead of which he sits on a stool, and becomes very active in trying to look wise and feel happy, but in fact looks very foolish and feels very miserable. All this would seem to be quite foreign to the object of this sketch, "An Amateur Female Minstrel Show," but the connection will develop as we proceed.

Whether from an inherent female instinct, or from an inspiration induced by the dignity of the position

may not be readily apparent, but it is a most noticeable fact that when a woman is once elevated to the high and honorable distinction of presiding officer of the O. E. S., she is at once seized with an unquenchable ambition to distinguish her administration by some startling and epoch-making innovation.

At the time which this history is contemplating the incumbent of the office was a lady of striking personality, tall, of commanding presence, somewhat austere, rigid in discipline and the discharge of all the duties pertaining to the office, yet kind and considerate, especially when her methods of administration were not questioned, as they rarely were. Like her predecessors, but in a degree intensified by an uncontrollable ambition to make the period in the history of the O. E. S., between the years 190— and 190—, shine out as the time when the order had really found itself, and that its potent possibilities should materialize into a "goddess enlightening the community," metaphorically speaking.

So at the close of a regular meeting the W. M. (this is the title by which this officer is designated) startled the exhausted members by the following announcement:

"You ladies probably are not aware that it is my purpose at no distant date to inaugurate an enterprise that will not only recoup our depleted treasury, but will be a refining and inspiring treat, and a moral uplift to the community. It is unnecessary for me to go into details now, as you will know in due time the nature of the bold undertaking that I have determined upon. I will appoint a committee of four, consisting of Mrs. F——, Mrs. R——, Mrs. N—— and Mrs. T——. These ladies will meet me at my house

tomorrow at four o'clock, promptly, when I will divulge my scheme, and we will get on to our job at once. As any discussion or criticism of my enterprise will be entirely out of order, both are forbidden. You are now dismissed."

This announcement was delivered with impressive dignity, although it must be admitted that its effect was somewhat modified by the inelegant finale.

The next day the ladies who had been admonished to be on hand promptly were in their places at the precise moment. After some pleasantries, during which some one or more of the neighbors of the individual ladies were justly dealt with, the W. M. proceeded to relieve the burning curiosity of the ladies there assembled with the following announcement:

"I have assembled you ladies to lay before you my plan for an entertainment, and I will say, without any preliminaries, that it is to be a Minstrel Show."

At this startling announcement four pairs of hands came up and four mouths opened simultaneously and they all exclaimed in one breath: "What! a Nigger Show? Is that respectable?" And some went so far as to mildly suggest that it would be disgraceful. When the ladies had exhausted themselves the W. M. placed her final fiat on the matter by saying:

"I know that Minstrel Shows, as produced, are not respectable, indeed not fit for people of good social standing to see or hear; but minstrelsy per se is in its essence of the highest respectability. Now the reason why I have selected this subject is that it is the prerogative and duty of the O. E. S. to take up these things that have been perverted and have become depraved and elevate them to their pristine purity. There

is nothing so good for people or elevating as a good hearty laugh, provided it is provoked by real genuine wit, and that is the principal object of this entertainment. I have selected you ladies to be my End-men."

"End-men!" they all screamed in one voice.

"Yes," she said, "I use the term in its generic sense. You can well understand how incongruous End-women would sound. There is a lack of euphony that is horrid. Now, as I have said, our object is to make people laugh. Our jokes must all be original, refined, and above all, show real wit. We will meet again tomorrow at the same time, and I want each of you to bring an original joke, so that I may see what you can do, and what I may depend upon in this vital matter. You are now dismissed."

On the way home one of the ladies made the caustic observation, "What kind of a man is a generic End-man, anyhow?" No one seemed to know. One remarked: "If the W. M. was not so darned intellectual we should get along better; and as to jokes, I never tried to make one in my life." They all said the same and seemed very much depressed. Finally a bright idea struck one of them. She said: "My husband thinks he is awful smart and I will ask him to get up four jokes for us. The W. M. will never know but they are ours." They were all delighted with the idea, and felt a great sense of relief.

After supper that night the lady with the "smart husband" explained to him the nature of the enterprise in which she was taking a part, and appealed to his vanity, as she knew how to do by saying that each of the four ladies was required to bring an original joke the next day, that they had worried over it until they

were all about sick, and had finally agreed to ask him to write them for them, as they all knew he was capable of doing. This had the desired effect, and he said that he did not feel worthy of the compliment, but as long as they had asked him to he would do the best he could. So he retired to his "den," and worked long into the night, with the results as will appear at the next meeting of the committee.

The ladies were in their places at the appointed hour that afternoon. As soon as the W. M. could see a break in the conversation, she called to order and asked for the reading of the jokes, which were as follows: Mrs. F——: Why don't a hen climb a tree. Answer: Because she had rather fly.

Mrs. R——: When is a hen not a hen. Answer: When she's a rooster (when she is roosting).

Mrs. N——: Who first discovered the hen? Answer: A colored person, of course.

Mrs. T——: When a hen lays an egg why does she always cackle? Answer: Because being a female she can't keep a secret.

The W. M. heard these "jokes" read with an expression of surprise and disgust, increasing as the reading proceeded. When it had ended she said: "Well, ladies, I do not want to hurt your feelings, but I am afraid these will not do. I think they show considerable originality and are quite witty (at which remark she had a severe coughing fit behind her fan), but they do not seem to be up to the standard which I had set for this performance; besides, I think there is altogether too much Hen in them. How did it happen that you all chose the same subject?"

By this time the ladies had developed considerable

color, and after an awkward silence one of them said:

"We all tried to think of something, but could not, so all agreed to get a certain man to write them for us; he said they were all right, and he made them all about hens because it was a 'Hen Show,' and he thought them very appropriate, and was sure they would make the audience laugh."

The W. M. could restrain herself no longer. "I don't know who wrote them," she said, "but whoever did is a fool, and I take it as an insult for anyone to try and palm off such silly stuff on us, besides his remark about a hen show was insulting. I do not doubt the people would laugh, but they would laugh at us, not for any wit there is in them. There's a great difference between being laughed at and a laugh provoked by wit, and for my part I do not propose to take any chances of being laughed at."

Then one of the ladies, choking with resentment, said: "My husband wrote them, and I think them very good—good enough."

At this the W. M. was both mortified and mollified, and endeavored to calm the troubled waters, with a rather lame modification of her first statement, as she said:

"Of course, I did not mean anyone in particular by what I said, but what I meant was that all men are fools about some things. I do not know a man who is capable of originating a real good joke. It not only takes brains, but a keen sense of the ludicrous, a strong imagination and great originality. Besides if they were capable of helping us I should be opposed to allowing them to, as we want all the glory of it ourselves. As I presume you ladies do not care to try again, I

will take it upon myself to furnish the jokes. I have selected the ladies to fill the balance of the places, and we will meet tomorrow for a full rehearsal, at which time I will have the jokes ready."

On the way home one of the ladies observed: "Do you suppose the W. M. realized the connection between what she said about the ability that it requires to originate jokes, and then announcing that she would take it upon herself to prepare them?" They all said that they saw it, and wondered that she did not. They hoped it would not occur to her, as it might be embarrassing, but the merriment they got out of it was part compensation for the humiliation to which they had been subjected.

When the time arrived the whole "company" was on hand. The W. M. proceeded at once to organize. "Now," she said, "you four ladies of the committee will be the end-men, as I have already informed you, and you will put on real blacking, the others will wear black masks. I, of course, will not be disguised at all, as I shall be the legerdemain." The what! they all screamed in one voice. The W. M. turned very red, but otherwise was calm and explained: "You understand that on the stage we will be arranged in a sort of a semi-circle; the end-men form the two ends of the half-circle, the person in the center is the leader—the one that asks the questions and all that; the balance of the space is filled in with the rest of the company. Perhaps I am mistaken about what the leader is called; it did not seem to sound just right, but we will be sure before we go ahead." Some one suggested if it was not interlocutor.

"Well, I don't care what it is called," said the W.

M.; "whatever it is, I'm it! Now we must all have stage names. Mrs. F—— you will be Miss Rosebud. Mrs. R—— you will be Miss Snowball. Mrs. N—— you will be Miss Daisy. Mrs. T—— you will be Miss Sunflower.

"Now, remember your names. The other ladies will not need stage names, as they will not have much to do except to sing in the chorus, and it will be more dignified to use their real names. I will be known as Miss Juliet. (From now on she will assume that designation.) And now," said Miss Juliet, "we will get down to business. The four end-men will, of course, have the jokes. Miss Rosebud this will be yours: Why is the Democratic party like an old shoe? The answer is because it is easy to de-feat."

Miss Rosebud said she could not see the point. "Why," said Miss Julie, "don't you see? An old shoe is easy to the feet, and this is a play on words by saying to de-feat, instead of the feat. Now do you see?"

"No, I don't, and I do not believe the audience will see it, either."

"Well," she said, "you just say it as I have explained and I will risk but the audience will see the point. I can almost hear them laugh now! An audience would be very dull that could not see the joke, it is so plain"; at which unfortunate remark there came near being a fatal eruption, but by great tact it was smoothed over and the rehearsal continued.

"Miss Snowball, this is yours: Why is a dog without a tail like a man who never sees a joke? The answer is, because there is no wag."

Miss Snowball looked puzzled.

"Can't you see the point?" "No, I can't," she ac-

knowledged, "but perhaps it will come to me after awhile."

"I should think it ought to," was the somewhat sarcastic reply, and she proceeded:

"Miss Daisy, this is yours: Why is a girl locked up in a room like a certain vegetable? The answer is becouse she cant-elope. Do you see the point? for if you do not I shall have the fidgets."

Miss Daisy said she did, but she didn't.

"Miss Sunflower, this is yours: Why is the hat of some women like charity? The answer is, because it covers a multitude of sins." This one they all saw and all laughed.

"Thank goodness," said Miss Juliet, "there is one joke out of the lot that does not require explanation. Now I want you to study these jokes until you thoroughly understand them, and can render them with that eclat that will convulse the audience. I know the jokes are so good that they can't help laughing, if you only make the points plain"; and she laughed in sympathy with the imaginary outburst of mirthfulness. She continued:

"You know the brightest things fall flat unless rightly interpreted and effectively rendered. That is, for the moment you must forget yourselves and personify the jokes, and then you will be sure to carry the audience with you."

The "girls" looked stupefied by this "lucid" injunction, and one of them had the temerity to ask what she meant. "Why," she said with some asperity, "it means you are to forget yourselves for the time being and become the personification of the jokes." They all said they understood and would try it; but when

alone they indulged in some sarcasm not meant for the ears of Miss Juliet.

"I have thought of a conundrum," suddenly said one of the party. "It is this: Why is the language and jokes of Miss Juliet like a very fine needle?"

They all gave it up.

"Because no one can see the point."

They all agreed that this was good, but also agreed that they must do their best to make the points clear in the jokes that had been assigned them.

The most formidable obstacle, which confronted them, and one which takes all the ingenuity and mental resources, not only of the management, but of the entire company, was the construction of a poster, announcing the coming event. None of them had ever had any experience in a literary effort of this character, and for a time it seemed that this was the rock on which the entire enterprise would be wrecked. The manager said it would not do to imitate the announcements of the traveling shows; that it must show originality, be chaste in language and style, yet comprehensive and forceful. So she appointed a committee of three, of which she made herself chairman, to work out this complicated problem. The committee wrestled with the subject all the afternoon and far into the night, and emerged with the following:

25 LAUGHS FOR 25 CENTS

The Ladies of the
O. E. S.
Offer to the citizens of this and surrounding towns an Evening of
UNALLOYED ENJOYMENT.

A LADIES' AMATEUR MINSTREL
ENTERTAINMENT!
Refined, Elevating, Deliciously Funny.
SONGS AND JOKES
(All original)
These Jokes have been worked out with much Care
and Thought, and will be the Feature of the
Entertainment.
They cannot fail to convulse everyone who hears them.
Come and bring your Family and you
will feel better for it.
GET YOUR SEATS BEFORE THE RUSH.
DON'T FORGET THE DATE!

These posters were duly exhibited in various public places and excited varied and variegated comment, but it had the effect to give the enterprise a wide publicity, which is the end of all advertising.

It would be interesting to follow the "Company" through its various and varied struggles, and note the tribulations and the many narrow escapes from total wreckage incident to the conflicting elements of a "Female Aggregation" during the many agonizing rehearsals preparatory to the culmination of the great event. But time and space forbid so interesting a pastime.

As the evening approached which was to witness the realization of their hopes or fears, the nervous strain became more intense, and the rehearsals resembled a stand-up discussion of some local exciting episode rather than an effort for artistic expression.

The fateful evening had arrived; but that one prominent feature of the performance may be fully under-

stood, it is necessary to make a slight digression. The woman with the "bright husband" took him after supper and essayed to coach him. She said: "Now I am awfully afraid that our jokes will fall flat, and if they do, and no one laughs, it will just kill us all; now you must laugh, long and loud, at everything that is said or done, that is funny, whether anyone else laughs or not, and perhaps they will follow."

And she rehearsed all the "funny" things that were "laying in wait" for the prospective audience.

"But," he protested, "I should feel awfully green to be the only one to laugh, besides how am I to know when to laugh?"

This unkind and unfeeling insinuation brought out a characteristic response: "If you don't know enough to appreciate a good joke you had better stay at home!" But she quickly added, "You won't stay at home, you are going, and you are going to laugh, too. For fear that the jokes will not get through your thick pate before the next day, I will give you a sign at the right time. I will have my right foot up" (she would have on a pair of his No. 11 shoes), "and when I wiggle my toe you applaud or laugh. If it is to the right, you applaud—if to the left, you laugh, and you see that you do it, too!"

From some slight glimpses he had caught into the character of that female, by a rather intimate acquaintance of more than thirty years, he knew that further resistance was useless, so acquiesced, saying that he would do the best he could.

"Oh! dear," she said, "my joke is the one about the girl locked up in a room, and I know I shall get it wrong. Every time I try to think of it, this is the

way it comes to me: 'Why is a girl locked up in a room like a cantaloup?' and if I say that, of course, it is all spoiled, and I am so afraid that I shall make that blunder; it would be just my luck to say it just that way. Oh! dear, dear, I would give anything that you have got if I had nothing to do with it. To be honest, there is nothing to laugh at, but you must, or we shall all die," and she burst into uncontrollable sobs.

The evening had arrived and the audience was large and expectant. As the curtain rose it was really an inspiring sight. The "end men" were blacked, the others wore masks, except the Interlocutor; excitement had given a becoming flush to her handsome face, and her superb figure, tall and stately, was a sight that drew admiration and applause from the audience—this was lucky.

The performance commenced with a chorus by the whole company. It is probable that not one in that whole aggregation had ever been accused of any musical ability, and if they had been it was painfully apparent that they were wholly innocent; although there was one that would probably have plead guilty. The orchestra consisted of a violin, a flute and a piano. During a brief prelude by the orchestra, the company was clearing its throat and striking the proper attitude. It was evident that they were all suffering from stage fright, so the start was spasmodic—several got off too soon and the others in trying to catch up made a discord that sent the cold shivers down the back of the violin, he having an extremely sensitive ear. The impetus gained in trying to overtake the first lot, as soon as they had caught up sent them beyond them and made still more frightful discords that paralyzed the

violin, and the flute was so pleased that he found it impossible to maintain the necessary "pucker," and so he was out; but the piano heroically stuck to it and tried to drown all the discordant sounds.

Before the end of the verse was reached, one by one had dropped out, but two or three, feebly but heroically, stuck to it to the end, when the Interlocutor motioned them to be seated. The face of the Interlocutor and the portion of the faces of the others that could be seen were very red. The applause was confined to the individual who had been coached—he clapped vigorously, which the Interlocutor acknowledged by a graceful bow, at which a suppressed titter ran through the audience, producing a still deeper scarlet on her face.

Then came the crucial test—the first joke:

"Miss Juliet," said Miss Rosebud, "why is the democratic party like an old shoe?"

"I really don't know, Miss Rosebud. Why is the democratic party like an old shoe?"

"Because an old shoe is so easy to the feet."

Of course the audience did not see the point, as there was no point to see, and no one laughed except the lone idividual, and he hesitated, but on vigorous motion of that fateful toe, to which his eyes were involuntarily riveted, burst into vociferous applause, making himself the focus of every eye in the house. The next number was a solo by the "star singer." She came gracefully forward. The orchestra played the first measure of "Annie Laurie," and she started in. Her voice was feeble at first, but gained strength as she warmed up; her low and middle tones became passably good,

but she attempted several trills, which gave the impression that she was trying to gargle her throat. She lost the key several times, and the violin was forced to retire.

She "manfully" struggled through all the verses, however, and with a last spasmodic effort to "gargle" her throat, sat down. The gloom deepened, relieved only by the loud demonstration by the "martyr," who by this time was attracting more attention than the stage. One lady was heard to ask her neighbor: "Does Mr. —— ever drink?" The other answered: "I have heard that he does sometimes, and he has either been drinking tonight or he is a bigger fool than I had supposed him to be, which is saying a great deal. What he sees to laugh at I cannot for the life of me understand."

Then came the next joke. Miss Rosebud fired the following at the Interlocutor:

"Why is a dog without a tail like a man who cannot see a joke?"

"I must give it up. Why is a dog without a tail like a man who can't see a joke?"

"Because he can't wag his tail."

The audience searched in silent wonder for the point, but none appeared. The "martyr" laughed, at which many smiled. Then a member recited "The Charge of the Light Brigade." The audience was very sorry for her, and expressed its feelings in continued silence, but the "martyr" cheered. The opinion of the lady of this individual's mental condition was by this time generally shared by all present. Now came the one he had been anxiously waiting for. It was Miss Daisy's

turn, and true to perverse nature, she said just what she had tried so hard not to say. She said:

"Miss Juliet, why is a girl locked up in a room like a cantalope?"

The answer of the Interlocutor was drowned in a hearty and real laugh by the "martyr," and, to the astonishment of all, the curtain was rung down without further ceremony, and the "Grand Olio" was ended.

The balance of the entertainment consisted of singing by a quartette engaged for the purpose, a piano solo, a violin solo, etc., etc., all of which was meritorious enough, but the audience was so depressed that it could not respond, and when the curtain finally fell, all sadly and silently wended their way to their various homes sadder, if not wiser.

The "martyr" ventured behind the scenes and there witnessed some real artistic acting, that would require the pen of a Dante to adequately describe. Every member of the "aggregation" was wildly swinging her arms, all talking at once at the top of their voices. Nearly all were crying, and the tears of the endmen coursing down their cheeks had revealed alternate streaks of black and white, producing a grotesque tatooed effect. The very air quivered with a storm of epithets, the most prominent of which was fools! fools! The Interlocutor, whose voice like her stature towered above all others, put into concrete form the feelings of the whole company when she said: "I did not suppose this town was made up wholly of fools. I must admit that you ladies—the endmen—did not bring out the jokes as well as you might have done, but notwithstand-

ing all that, the point to them all was so apparent that anyone with half an idea, should have seen them—and —and to think that there was only one man in the whole audience who knew enough to see through them, and generous enough to laugh at the right time." And she sank into a chair and gave herself up to woman's solace—a good cry.

The "martyr" has not dared to this day to tell her why he laughed.

An Experimental Telephone Line

THERE is a town on a high elevation, which forms a part of the western slope of the Green Mountain range. The town has been known by the appelation of "Happy Hollow," to be sure, but it is spelled "Holla," and owes its origin to the singular formation of the mountain peaks, which are so situated with reference to each other, that when a sound of any considerable volume is made, an echo is produced which is repeated from peak to peak, till it gets tired, then it goes visiting to neighboring mountains, and, after being lost sight of for a long time, finally returns much livelier than when it started on its long journey. While this phenomena is of the most intense scientific interest, this aspect does not impress itself on the minds of the natives, but, instead, is said to be utilized by them in a most practical way. As, for instance, if a man on retiring, say, at nine o'clock in the evening, wishes to rise at four in the morning, he goes to the door and shouts: "It's time to get up," and then retires, untroubled with any doubt that he will call himself at the desired time, and, sure to its promise, back it comes, at the exact moment, and the man hears himself shout: "It's time to get up!"

This marvel does not excite the slightest wonder or comment among the people, but it is taken for granted as a providential arrangement, instituted long before the invention of alarm clocks, for the especial benefit

and convenience of the people of this favored spot. The writer would not risk his reputation as to the literal truthfulness of this legend which has given the town its designation, but whatever its origin, it is vividly apropos, for it is, indeed, a happy community, made so by its isolation, which is so complete that it has not been aroused from its primitive lethargy by any of the impulses of the great stirring world about them, except as recorded in this story.

The town is situated at least twenty miles from a railroad station, or any large town, and its only connection with the outside world is a weekly stage, bringing the meager mail and an occasional passenger. The "metropolis" of "Happy Holla" is a spot euphoniously designated "The Corner." Here is situated a store, where every commodity for the wants of the simple people is kept and exchanged for hay, maple syrup, dried apples, homemade stockings and mittens, "skim-milk," cheese, etc., etc.

The people are very religious, never having had their faith disturbed by the "higher criticism," "new thought" or appendicitis. There is a little church at The Corner, to which is attached a long line of horse-sheds, extending in a straight line due east, giving it more the appearance, at a little distance, of a rope-walk, than of a place of worship. While, as has been said, the people are devoutly pious, they do not let their religion interfere with their habits of thrift or parsimony. They rarely tax themselves to support a minister. One year, however, when the "spirit had been quickened" by the efforts of an itinerant revivalist, the congregation voted to extend a call to a man with a family of a wife and six children, at a salary

of $160 a year. At the end of the year they were behind on the salary to the amount of $40.

A meeting was called to see what should be done in this serious emergency, and to decide whether the minister should be retained another year. Deacon John Cilly was a man of much importance in the community. He was the leader in the church and in town affairs; he had been first selectman from the days of his youth up, and much deference was paid to his opinion—in fact, his word was law, and few had the temerity to oppose him, and if they did they generally had good reason to regret it. The deacon called the meeting to order and, in his uncouth, ponderous way, said:

"Bretherin and sisterin—We are met here tonight to consider many important things. I have prayerfully gone over them many times, and the Lord has let the light in, and I can see my way as plain as day. And, fustly, Deacon Adams, our minister, was to preach for us for $160 a year—if he could get it—but it seems he can't get it. I sed at the time, and say it now, that was too much; I put the figer at $120, which seemed to me fair, and that is what he has got, and it is enough, considerin'. That is about two dollars and fifty cents a day, for the time he worked, preachin' on Sunday, and not mor'n two or three hours at that. I call it good pay. It's mor'n any on us can earn by workin' fifteen hours a day. A hundred and twenty dollars is a big pile of money. It don't grow on every bush, and I say it's enough." This declaration brought out a powerful "Amen" from Deacon Pillsbury, who had subscribed $2.50 toward the salary, and agreed to give a bushel of potatoes in the fall at "potato diggin' time." He had delivered a bushel of small potatoes

which were the culls after the salable ones had been picked out. He said he was unable to pay the money, as he had had bad luck that season, having lost a sheep and two of his best hens.

Deacon Cilly proceeded: "I don't say that there was anything the matter with Brother Adams' preachin'; it was good enough, I s'pose, as preachin' goes; but I ain't stuck on preachin'. It don't seem to reach the spot like singin' and prayin'. When Samanthy Jenks plays the accordin' and all jine in the singin' and then all hands pray all 'round, we don't go to sleep as we do under preachin', and we go home feelin' that we have got our muny's wuth. That is what I call religun, pure and undefiled. I say we don't want no minister; it's a big expense and we hain't got nothin' to show for it. Are we any better than we was a year ago? Have we got any more religun than we had then? To all of which I say, no. And what we had seems to have petered out. The feelin' ain't much like what you get when we all take holt of hands and sing them good salm tunes, and all get down on our knees and have a season of prayer together. The Holy Ghost seems to cum right down among us and we feel—we feel—I may say we feel good. As I have heretofore sed, we don't want no minister, and if you say let him go, I will hitch up my ox-team and take him wherever he sez."

The various effective periods which the deacon made during his speech were liberally punctuated by lusty "amens" from all parts of the house, and when he said, "all who say let him go, hold up your rite hands," nearly every hand came up, and the poor, starved minister and his family were left stranded.

"Happy Holla" had the further distinction of having never supported a doctor, lawyer or any other disturbing element, except a Woman's Sewing Society. As has been noted, its only connection with the outside world was by means of a weekly stage. A telegraph line was once run into the place, and an instrument installed in the store, at the "corner." This establishment was presided over by one Oliver Bunker. Oliver was a genius of the type found nearest the soil, and was so deliciously unique that he may possibly form a central figure of another story, but for the present we shall be obliged to forego a further acquaintance. His daughter, Betsy Bunker, was installed as operator and taught the rudiments of the mysterious dots and dashes. Now, it was the universal belief of the people of "Happy Holla" that the only legitimate use to which the telegraph was ever put was to convey messages of death or other disaster; so when the poles were put up, the wire strung, and the ominous instruments installed in Oliver's store, a shudder of apprehension ran through the community ,and when any of the people visited the store and heard the click of the sounder, to their affrighted imaginations it meant agony for some poor soul. Many protested against the introduction of so terrifying a disturber of the ancient peace, and many said that if one of them awful lookin' things should be brought to them they would not touch it.

One day a dispatch came to old Robert Humphill. He and his simple wife Abigail were affectionately dubbed far and near as "Uncle Bob and Aunt Nab." They had lived together so long that they had probably forgotten that they had ever had a courtship or had passed through a ceremony of marriage. One would

not have thought that a romance had ever entered their lives. They had one daughter, who had married and moved to a distant State many years before.

As the message was the first one Betsy had taken, she walked to Uncle Bob's house to deliver it, a distance of about a mile. Uncle Bob was at the barn, so she handed it to Aunt Nab. Aunt Nab was almost paralyzed; the color left her face and her strength failed; she placed the slip on the table, sat down and gazed at it in a stupor of fear. When Uncle Bob came in he saw at once that something was wrong, and anxiously inquired: "Why mother, what's the matter?" She could not speak, and answered by pointing to the source of her terror. He was equally terrified, and they sat and looked into each other's blanched faces in an agony of despair. Uncle Bob was the first to speak. He said, in a trembling voice: "Had we better open it?" "No! no!" said Aunt Nab, "it is something awful, and I know it will kill me; we will put it away for tonight and perhaps it will not seem so dreadful tomorrow." She took the tongs and, getting a firm grip on it, carefully transferred it to the "best room," opened the Bible and carefully placed it between the leaves and closed the book. She was relieved to think that the ugly thing was securely deposited in that sacred place, and she somehow felt that she would be better able to bear its awful contents after it had lain there over night.

Then they sat down and took hold of hands, and for a long time gazed into the fire, neither daring to speak, and starting at the least unusual sound. They had sat there until long after their bedtime, when they were really startled by hearing a team drive into the

yard, and the next moment the door flew open and in rushed their daughter. She had married and moved to a distant State many years before, and this was her first visit to the home of her childhood since she had left, and as it was wholly unexpected on the part of her parents, the demonstrations of surprise and joy were most cordial and affectionate. She embraced her mother again and again, showering kisses on her loved face, and her father received his full share of caresses and token of affection. After this demonstration had spent itself, and they could look into each other's faces and talk calmly, she said:

"Father, why did you not meet me at the Corner?"

"How could I," he asked, "when we did not know you were coming?"

"Did you not receive my telegram?" she asked with much surprise.

Pa looked into ma's face and ma looked into pa's face, and they both looked foolish. Presently a smile was born in the dimples of ma's fat cheeks and pa's elongated face began to shorten up, and a smile gradually spread over their faces, and at last they broke into fits of hearty and prolonged laughter. The daughter looked on with puzzled surprise, and at length asked what there was about her question that was so funny. They had to tell her the whole story of their fright at the sight of the telegram. The old house was surprised at the peals of laughter that rang through its low rooms, as it was the first laugh that had been heard since their only child had gone away so long ago.

One serious aspect of this incident soon presented itself to Uncle Bob. He said: "The darn of this hull bizness is, if it gits out, we shall never hear the last

on't. If it gits 'round to Oliver Bunker, the hull town will know it before pertater diggin' time, and we shall be the laughin' stock the rest of our lives," and the old man groaned with the dreadful prospect.

Of course the story did get out, and all other gossip was suspended for the time being, to talk and laugh over the story of Uncle Bob's telegram. When one person met a neighbor, the first salutation was: "Hev ye hearn about Uncle Bob's telegram?" The story soon lost its original shape, as all such stories do, by the accretions of repetition, until the "father would not have been able to recognize the son."

This telegram was the only legitimate business done over the line as far as known. Betsy used it faithfully in flirting with the young man at the other end of the line. While this was pleasant for the two "faithful servants" of the company, it did not assure dividends, and the instruments were taken out. All that there is left as a reminder of the enterprise are the story of "Uncle Bob's Telegram," a lot of rusty wire and some dejected-looking poles, and the marriage of the two "faithful servants," brought about by a combination of two great mysteries—love and electricity.

My readers may begin to wonder if this is not a "Buck Fanshaw" story. It does look like it. But the digression has been made in order to get a glimpse of the people and their environment, who furnish the material for the real story, and to show their repugnance for all modern innovations and the ease with which they could be "worked."

The next raid on the peace and quiet of "Happy Holla" was the introduction of a telephone. The people had heard of the telephone—how people could stand

miles apart and talk with each other, but no one believed it. The wise ones said it was "onreasonable," "the thing couldn't be done," etc. So when a young man appeared among them one morning, with the avowed intention of forming a "company," and establishing a real telephone service, there was much excitement, and it became the only subject of conversation.

His plan, in brief, was this—which, by the way, presents no novelty—to obtain thirty-one subscribers—why thirty-one instead of thirty or thirty-two, he did not explain, but in the mind of the promoter that odd number seemed to have added something to the impressiveness of the scheme. The "company" to be capitalized at $3,100, divided into sixty-two shares at $50 a share, and the "company" would "assume all the risk." The thirty-one shares sold were designed by the promoters, of course, to pay all the expenses, and afford a handsome profit besides. The close-fisted farmers did not take to the scheme very readily, but he did not ask for any money—only their signatures on innocent-looking forms that he showed them. He assured them that they would probably never be asked for any money, that the profits on the business would take care of their notes and leave them a handsome profit besides, and then the dividends would go on accumulating so fast that they would all be rich in a few years. It did not seem to occur to them that the only "income" possible would be just what they, themselves, paid into the treasury. Their imaginations pictured some mysterious, occult source of fabulous profits beyond their comprehension.

His argument with the women was that each one

could talk with all the other thirty members at the same time, that they could get all the news instantly, that on stormy days they could sit in their kitchens and visit just the same as though the person was present. These and many other equally as alluring advantages he explained with that irresistible "logic" which is the principal stock in trade of this class of enterprising sharpers.

It would be interesting to follow him step by step, until he had worked them up to the "sticking point." Suffice it to say, at last he had secured the required number of subscribers, and had good notes in his pocket to the amount of $1,550, and each one of the thirty-one farmers was the happy possessor of a neatly engraved stock certificate. This evidence of wealth, coming so easy seemed to them a rare piece of good fortune, and they took much delight in exhibiting them to their less fortunate neighbors. Work was soon commenced, and in a surprisingly short time thirty-one farmhouses were connected on one line, and the thirty-one women instructed in the mysteries of talking "at a mark," as some of them called it. The first experiments were awkward and furnished many amusing incidents.

It all seemed so unreal and uncanny—to hear and recognize voices at so great a distance as two or three miles—that it was some time before many of the more superstitious ones could be induced to touch the "dangerous looking thing." But familiarity soon banished all their fears, and in a few days they had mastered the difficulties and were enjoying the anticipated pleasure of giving more rapid circulation to choice bits of gossip. But the breaking up of old, fixed habits by the

introduction of modern inventions is revolutionary in its nature, and carries with it a fixed and inevitable penalty. True to the promises of the promoter, it did wonderfully increase the facilities for "visitin'" and the circulation of local gossip and some scandals kept pace with the increased facilities. For a few days its novelty absorbed their entire attention, but they gradually settled down to "business" and the potential of the "new fangled thing" soon commenced to develop. The entire community was fast getting by the ears, and the peace that had reigned from time immemorial had taken wings for parts unknown.

It was hard for the women to comprehend that when one talked everyone else on the line could hear if they so wished. Each one acknowledged to herself that when a call was heard she intended to, and did rush to her instrument and greedily absorb all that was being said, but each one supposed that she was the only one listening, and so when any two were talking they entirely ignored the fact that others might be listening. And just here was the fatal defect in this great modern wonder, for, as a matter of fact, every time a call was heard, the thirty-one women dropped everything, the thirty-one receiving tubes were taken down, and pressed hard into thirty-one waiting, expectant, anxious ears. As all the gossip and scandal were strictly of a local nature, it may well be seen that the most disagreeable and compromising complications became inevitable. There were charges and counter-charges, denials, explanations, and "I never said so's" without number, all tending to increase the excitement and multiply the estrangements.

Every woman's nerves were wrought up to the high-

est tension, whether she was the talker or talkee—whether the maligned or the maligner. The feverish unrest became infectious, and the various neighbors who were not "on the line," had now become very neighborly from the delights of hearing "the thing talk," and incidentally getting any choice bits of news that might be afloat in the community, and frequently having their souls wrenched by a stray bit of scandal of a personal nature. And they had much satisfaction after the phone was hung up, in sitting down and indulging in a spirited tirade against the other thirty members and all those who sympathized with them. The reign of this social catalepsy could not long endure in a community inured to habits of peace and quiet. It finally culminated in an incident prolific of unusual interest to the community and inciting to the imaginations of the purveyors of the social stimulus.

Henry Sykes was a large and prosperous farmer of "Happy Holla," and had always been looked up to as belonging to the "aristocracy," as his father had before him. He had married a young woman from the neighboring town of St. A——, who had been liberally educated, and was of superior intellect and attainments. Her neighbors were not very congenial, and she had always held herself quite aloof from them, and as a consequence she had incurred their displeasure, and was, therefore, the object of unfavorable comment and bitter criticism. They had one daughter, Julia, who had recently graduated from Smith College, and was in consequence an object of suspicion.

Mrs. Phebea Goss called up Mrs. Sarah Grampus and, after the usual preliminary talk, the following conversation took place:

Mrs. Goss: "Mrs. Grampus, have you heard the talk that is goin' about Julia Sykes?"

Mrs. Grampus: "No, I ain't heard nothin'."

Mrs. Goss: "Wal, that's queer; it's all over town, at prayer meetin' last night, it was the only thing talked about."

Mrs. Grampus: "No, I wasn't at prayer meetin', and so hain't heard any news all this week; do for land sakes tell me all about it."

Mrs. Goss: "Wal, you remember that dude that was at old Miss Gaskill's last spring, who, they said, was her nephew, but it comes out that he want no relation, and you know there was talk then about his hangin' 'round Julia Sykes; wal, he is here ag'in, and they say he is up to the Sykes' every night and stays awful late, some says he stays till half past nine, and some says he don't go away till ten eny night; don't nobody know who he is or where he he cum from nor nothin' about him, but a young man who wears a starched shirt and a starched collar and a necktie weekdays, and has such soft, white hands, you know there can be nothin' good sed of him; some says he's a gambler, some says he's a pickpocket, and some says he's awfuller than that. If he should try to step up to any of my gals, he'd get a piece of my mind. You may be sure he ain't hangin' 'round Julia Sykes for no good, and I think it's just awful. You know Mrs. Sykes cum here from sumwhers, the Lord knows where, when she married Henry; they sed she was edicated, and was awful smart, leastwise she has allers been awful stuck up; haint never come to any of our prayer meetins', the So'in Circle or the Grange, and when I meet her I go right past and never speak to the hussy, but these stuck

up folks gits a fall sooner or later, and I guess she will come down off her high hoss when she finds out that her girl is so awfully talked about, and when there is good reason for it, too.

"Well, if I hear anythin' new I will call you up and tell you all about it, and if you hear anythin' don't fail to call me up. Well, we have had a real good visit, haint we? What a blessin' this telefome is, ain't it? Why the news ust' to git old before it gut to us, specially in bad weather, but it don't make no difference, we don't hev to wait for good weather, but can set the news a flyin' in a minit. How good the Lord is to us to send us such fixins.

"Well, good-bye, and don't forgit if you git eny news." And Mrs. Goss sat down before her kitchen fire and rocked to and fro with that self-satisfied feeling that comes from the consciousness of a duty well performed.

As has been said, these two women were wholly unsuspicious that any one was listening to their talk, but as a matter of fact twenty-nine were listening, all with great satisfaction, with one exception, and that was Mrs. Henry Sykes. As we already know, this lady was superior to her surroundings, but she did possess that inherent instinct of woman—curiosity—and to almost an abnormal degree or her good sense and superior good taste would have saved her from so rude and unwomanly an act as telephone eavesdropping. She was furious at what she had heard. She told her daughter of its substance, and said she would go over to Mrs. Goss' and teach her a wholesome lesson.

That afternoon she hitched up her horse and drove over to Mrs. Goss'. That lady received her with much

cordiality, but the dignified reserve of her caller, and the ominous intensity of her drawn features telepathically conveyed to the mind of Mrs. Goss that the call was not wholly of a friendly nature. After the usual formalities and they were seated in the "best room," Mrs. Sykes began:

"Mrs. Goss, I am ashamed to acknowledge it, but I was listening at the telephone this morning and overheard your conversation with Mrs. Grampus regarding my daughter, and your slanderous insinuations. While I think such base, disgusting, untruthful gossip rarely worth resenting, yet when it affects one's own daughter, and is designed to blacken the character of a pure girl, it is hard for a mother to be indifferent to it, and I thought it might be a wholesome lesson to you if I came over and enlightened you regarding the young man, and his relation to my family. His name is Walter Hurlburt; he lives in St. A——. His father is a leading lawyer there and is said to be wealthy. Walter has recently graduated from the Harvard Law School and is now in partnership with his father. I am, as you may know, from the same town, and our families have always been intimate. My daughter became acquainted with him while on a visit to her grandparents. They have become engaged, and are to be married this fall."

With mock seriousness she continued: "I admit he does wear a starched shirt and collar and necktie on weekdays, but I do not know of any other bad habits that he possesses, and he may outgrow these in time, but if he does not, he may not be ruined by them. The vile story you started, having no other foundation than the imaginings of a perverted and vindictive nature,

has by this time, been repeated by every woman in the neighborhood, with such additions as suggested by each person's desire for sensationalism, and it will go on growing until the young man and my daughter become monsters of immorality and wickedness in the minds of the community or until they are undeceived by the event of their marriage. While this episode is painful and humiliating to me beyond measure, still I have the great satsfaction afforded by knowing that the story is without the slightest foundation in fact.

"Did you ever stop to think of the ruined lives and homes, and the early graves filled by just such thoughtless, wicked, lying, slanderous stories as this? No, probably you never did, but in my opinion the slanderous tongues of women who have not cultivated a taste for anything higher than idle gossip for conversation, is directly responsible for more misery and failures and human wrecks than any other of the social evils. The person who deliberately blackens and ruins the character and life of an innocent person is morally and more cowardly criminal than the one who risks his own life and commits murder for the sake of gain or revenge. Now, I hope this much good will come out of this miserable business; that hereafter you will live up to the religion you profess, and do to others as you would have them do to you. Good afternoon." And Mrs. Sykes took a hasty departure.

Mrs. Goss was at heart a really good, God-fearing woman, and her only fault was the universal one of "original sin," manifested in an uncontrollable love of gossip, thoughtlessly disregarding the injury and injustice done to others. She was completely crushed by this severe arraignment of Mrs. Sykes. She sat for

a long time, and as she gradually recovered from her stupor and a realization of her great sin suddenly dawned upon her, her tender heart was broken. She resolved to undo the mischief she had done as far as lay in her power. She lived near the little church, and that night was "prayer meeting night," and she knew there would be an unsually large attendance stimulated by this rare piece of scandal, and she resolved to invite all the women into her house and make a full confession of her sins.

This new resolution took possession of her, and before the day was ended she felt a spiritual exaltation that she had never felt before, but which she unconsciously recognized as the dawn of a new and better life. As the hour for prayer meeting arrived, the women poured in from all directions as Mrs. Goss had anticipated. Deacon Cilly opened the meeting and led in the singing and made the opening prayer. He was fully "on to his job," and it was remarked afterwards that he seemed inspired. During the prayer he referred pointedly to the "wickedness in high places," so unmistakably having reference to the topic in all minds that it brought a hearty and approving "amen" from all parts of the house. At the close of the meeting Mrs. Goss invited all the ladies to her house, and as they had received all the details from her that morning, they very naturally and reasonably thought it was for the purpose of further elaboration, and some new and startling details.

So before they were fairly seated the "discussion" commenced in a vigorous and characteristic manner, by each woman telling what she had heard, what she surmised and what others guessed. A listener would

have been very much puzzled to know what the talk was all about, as they all talked at once, but through that mysterious acuteness of woman's receptive faculties, each one, while apparently wholly absorbed in her own efforts, knew exactly what each one of the others was saying. After the subject had been exhausted and they were taking breath, Mrs. Goss found the opportunity for which she had waited. She was a large, powerful woman, with a voice of corresponding volume, and as she stood up, there was something in the dignity of her manner that at once attracted everyone's attention and caused a hush to fall upon the assembly. She spoke with a deliberation, earnestness and pathos that carried conviction and made one forget her idiomatic vernacular. She said:

"Now, folks, you have had your say, and now I will have mine. I know you heard this Julia Sykes talk, this morning, from me, and now I'm goin' to tell you more about it."

At this suggestive introduction, every woman present made some change in her position—some smoothed down their dresses, some felt of their back hair, and some got a firmer grip on their false teeth; they all gave significant glances, and settled down complacently in their seats in an expectant, listening attitude. Mrs. Goss had by this time collected herself, and proceeded: "What I sed about any wrong doins ain't so!" At this startling declaration, disapproval and disappointment were plainly expressed on the faces of all present. Mrs. Goss continued:

"That's what I axed you in here for—to tell you tain't so, and how bad I feel that I sed what I did. Mrs. Sykes was a-hearin' at her telefome" (telefome

was the way they pronounced it, as it was so pronounced by the man who installed the instruments) "and heard all I sed. She put on her bunnet and cum right over to my house. When she cum in I seen that she was awful mad about somethin', and the way she talked to me was just awful. She said there wan't a word of truth in the talk that there was anything wrong between the young man and her darter. She said that he is a young lawyer and lives in St. A——; that his family and her'n had alers been friendly, and that they was engaged, and will be married this fall. Then she talked of how wicked it is to talk about folks, especially when 'tain't so. She sed it's the wickedest thing in the world 'cept murder, and sometimes it's wickeder than that.

"Then she said a lot of other things which I can't remember, I was so cut up; then she left before I could say a word. I couldn't talk back for I felt that she was right and that made it awfully hard. And the more I think about it, the more I think she was right, and 'tis wicked to say things about folks unless you know they're so, and for my part I'm goin' to stop it, and enyway I shan't have enymore talkin' over the telefome; that's where all the trouble has cum from." And Mrs. Goss sat down, exhausted by her effort, and fanned herself with her apron.

For some moments not a word was spoken or a sound heard, except an occasional long breath, drawn here and there, plainly indicating disappointment.

Finally, Mrs. Jane Soaper arose and said: "I think that Mrs. Goss is too chicken-hearted. Wouldn't nobody back me down in that way. Per'aps what Mrs. Sykes sed was so and per'aps 'twan't. You can't allers tell about these high stuck-up folks; they may tell the

truth and they mayn't. I know what I seen with my own eyes, and so much I do know. I'ev seen um galivantin' up the road, ahold ov hands, aswingin' of um, and he a smokin' a segar and pinchin' her cheeks, and they both a laffin, as though it was cunnin, and you needn't tell me that people will do such things before folks, unless there's cuttins' up of some kind. And then, again, he's a lawyer and nobody ever heard of any good cummin' out'n them."

And she sat down amid a flood of tears of disappointment, and many of the women wiped their eyes in sympathy. Then Mrs. Sophia Pokebury laboriously arose. She was a very fleshy woman, but with a countenance out of which beamed benevolence, kindliness and motherly sweetness. She said:

"I agree with Mrs. Goss. I know 'tain't right to talk too much about folks although I'm afraid I do my part of it, and as for these young folks I s'pose they act foolish as all young folks do, and as all of us did when we was young and didn't know no better; but it ain't best to talk too much, unless we know for sure, and when we do know for sure, I hev noticed that it ginnerally turns out not to be so. So we ought to be more careful. But homsumever all this trouble comes from this new fangled thing the telefome. I was ded sot agin it from the first, but Poke"—she always referred to her husband by this convenient abreviation—"was just as dead set to have it. I told Poke I believed it was all the works of Satan. I sed, you can't make me believe that folks can stand miles apart and hear each other talk and recognize their voices 'thout the help of Satan, and now after all this trouble I know it is so.

"The Devil is allers hangin' 'round inventin' some

new contrivance to make trouble and set folks agin one another, and he thought the old way was not fast enough and so invented the telefome, and it don't do no good as far as I have ever heard 'cept to make trouble, and it's so clear that it is all the doin's of the Devil, that I can't see why we did not all see it at fust, and all of us took a stand for the help of the Lord against the mighty. But that sleek feller cum a palarverin' around with his soft voice and smooth ways, fairly made me do what I knew was wicked, and that I hadn't ought to do, and I think now he was the Devil himself."

At which suggestion a shudder passed through the whole audience, except a spinster, Miss Synthia Quigley by name, who, with a simper and a flush, broke in with:

"I think he's real nice; he cum to see me several times, and we had such nice talks. I was sorry when he left, and I never put up that rubber thing without thinkin' of him."

The audience expressed its disapproval of this interruption by casting very severe glances at the hapless author.

"None of us ever had any trouble with our neighbors until this contrivance of Satan cum among us," continued Mrs. Pokebury, "and seein' there has been nothin' but trouble and it is growin' wus and wus, and half of the folks won't speak to the other half when they meet, our church is bein' broke up, the Sewin' Socity is all by the ears, and at the Grange little knots of folks will git together and talk what they heard over the telefome, and everybody gits mad and goes home without doin' anythin' else. I want to ask what it's all a cumin to. It is plain to me that Satan has just got

us under his thumb, so to speak, and I see but one way, and that is to have the things taken out. As soon as I git home tonight I shall tell Poke to take his screwdriver and take it down off the wall, and carry the pesky thing to the barn where it won't do any more harm."

As Mrs. Pokebury warmed up to her subject, she became quite eloquent, and her argument, that it was all the work of Satan, carried conviction to the minds of all present, and when she made her final declaration that the thing should come out of her house, the response, "so shall I," was reiterated by all the victims of this disturbing innovation. So the meeting broke up with a tacit, if not an expressed, determination on the part of everyone, except Mrs. Soaper, to profit by the experience they had had, and correct a fault which had never before appealed to them, as one of the cardinal sins as expressed in the ninth commandment.

As the women arrived at their respective homes there was enacted a scene in every house, with very similar stage settings, but with acting, ranging through all the phases of human emotion, from the comic to heavy tragedy. But when a woman is impelled by a great moral impulse, nothing can resist her, and so before they slept thirty of the "Devil's talking machines," as the women got to calling them on their way home, were taken down and safely deposited in the barn.

The next day a meeting of the stockholders was called to consider the situation. The vital question in the mind of each one was, where the dividends were to come from under present conditions. After laboriously going over the situation, the conclusion was reached that they, at least, had had a taste of modern business methods.

The Lost Cap

AMONG the many social attractions of beautiful Lancaster is an organization of ladies, who think they are Masons, for the reason that through a subtle organized determination, they have been enabled to extract from guileless and unsuspecting victims some of the secrets of Freemasonry. The order is symbolically known as the O. E. S. And while the Masonic brethren look upon the organization with more or less disfavor, yet it is a most delightful society, including as it does in its membership the very best of the intelligence, culture and womanly loveliness of every community so fortunate as to possess its organized influence.

Especially is this the fact in Lancaster, and being so, it becomes a motive force which draws into its folds ladies of similar social standing and tastes from surrounding towns in all directions. Among the distant members is one of which the order is justly proud, but whose name will not be revealed; but for convenience, she will be called Mrs. O'B. She is a woman of striking personality, of rare accomplishments and a social favorite. It is not often that she graces the sessions of the order with her presence, but on a notable occasion last winter her presence added much to the social interest of the hour, and incidentally furnished the incident for this bit of tragic history.

The banquet, a thing of beauty and joy as served

by these ladies, and one of the leading attractions of its stated sessions, had come to a reluctant close, and all of the ladies had departed for their homes except a few choice and congenial spirits, who were indulging in the delightful post-prandial exercise of gossip about some of those who had withdrawn and were now out of hearing. During this conversation the ladies were putting on their wraps, all with hatpins of various shapes and patterns in their mouths, which however did not seem to interfere with their faculty and facility of conversation.

This pleasant pastime was suddenly and very rudely interrupted by Mrs. O'B., peremptorily demanding: "Who's got my cap?" This was said with an intonation and emphasis clearly indicating to the minds of all present that she believed someone guilty of great carelessness or an intentional "mistake." Everyone present immediately withdrew the pins already adjusted and replaced them in their mouths and critically examined their caps. They all declared their innocence of any intentional or accidental responsibility for the misfortune of the aggrieved lady. Some one suggested that perhaps Mrs. K. might have exchanged accidentally, whereupon she went to the telephone and called up that lady, and said: "This is Mrs. O'B. Someone has taken my cap; is it you?"

After that lady had made careful examination, her innocence seemed to be established. Then at the suggestion of various other ladies several others were called up with like results. All this time there was a dangerous light in her black, expressive eyes, which had the effect to paralyze all effort at conversation. She took the cap daintily by one "ear" and holding it up so that all could see, said:

"Just look at this cap; my cap is a genuine seal, made from a whole skin, and cost twenty-five dollars. This is one of those cheap things pieced up from waste and can be bought anywhere for two dollars, and besides it is all worn out," and turning the lining, she added, "the lining of my cap is blue silk, and this one is nothing but cheap cotton. How anyone could mistake my cap for this measly thing I am at a loss to understand; and I think I have a right to the suspicion that the exchange may not have been a mistake."

Then she tried it on and continued: "It is at least two sizes too small for me, and will afford little or no protection on such a night as this, besides I will not be seen with such a looking thing on my head as this is. I have a great mind to throw it on the floor and leave it."

One of the ladies suggested that she might tie a shawl over it so as to keep it in place; it would afford a little protection. Other ladies offered various suggestions, the result of which was that she put on the cap with a grimace of disgust, pulled it down over her wealth of black hair the best she could, wound a shawl two or three times around her chin and remarked that "while it would be no protection it was now covered up out of sight, where no one would see it," and with a curt "good-night," she left the hall, and was soon on her way home in company with a large party behind a spanking pair of horses, with beautiful sleighing, crisp air and the thermometer thirty degrees below.

On the way home the conversation was wholly on the subject of the cap, confined, however, to the victimized party, no one else getting a chance to speak.

Before reaching home, out of the pros and cons of

the "discussion" she had evolved the conclusion that her cap had been stolen, pure and simple. She had located the culprit with sufficient accuracy so that she was enabled to say: "It lays between two persons, and I am sure *one* of them would not do such a thing," and she was only prevented from maming the suspect by their timely arrival at her home.

As she entered the house the clock was just striking the hour of 2 A. M. She took off her wraps, including the much despised cap, threw it on the floor, and kicked it under the lounge, and ascended the stairs to her sleeping-room.

Her husband, who is a physician, was enjoying a well-earned rest after a hard day's work, and attesting oblivion to all external things by a healthy, well-modulated, rhythmic succession of snores.

It was with great effort that she was enabled to arouse him to a realizing sense of the trials of this hard life, and to comprehend that she had been the victim of heartless fate. She poured out the burden of her soul into unwilling ears. She said it was not so much the intrinsic loss that grieved her as the fact that she was really in love with the cap—it looked so rich, and was so becoming; with this last consideration came a flood of tears. This break in her "tale of woe" was the first opportunity the doctor had had to interpose a word. He said:

"I have told you repeatedly not to wear your best things to such places, and if you had paid any heed to my judgment in such matters you would not have lost your cap; but anyway, rest and sleep are of more importance to me just at this time than lost caps or lost souls."

And with this comforting and reassuring growl he turned over and resumed his snore at the exact point where it had been so rudely interrupted. She disrobed and got into bed, but not to sleep. The events of the evening assumed fantastic shapes and proportions, as all trouble does at that hour in the morning. Her indignation was mingled with grief at the thought that there could be a person in so refined and beneficent an order as the O. E. S. who would steal from a sister member. And she felt that she had been compromised by allowing herself to be drawn into membership in a body that could harbor such a character.

Toward morning she fell into a troubled sleep and dreamed of various attempts to recover her cap, but was frustrated at every turn. The doctor arose at an early hour in the morning, as was his custom, went to the barn, fed his horses, pigs and hens, milked the cow and did various necessary chores about the house. After "washing up," breakfast was announced. This he was leisurely partaking, with that enjoyment that comes from a good appetite and good cooking, when his wife abruptly entered the dining-room, cap in hand, with a determined tread that the doctor readily recognized.

Ignoring the usual morning salutation, she commenced by saying: "Now if you are awake and sufficinetly alive to appreciate and resent your wife's injuries, I want you to look at this cap and advise me what to do." He took the cap, and at the first glance a broad smile began to overspread his genial and expansive countenance, and to gradually approach the borders of hilarity. No one likes to be laughed at, and as she saw his lack of seriousness which she thought the

matter demanded, she characteristically observed: "What are you grinning like a goat for; why don't you say something?"

"Well, Marinda," he said, "that somewhat pleasant expression of countenance which you are pleased to compare to that of a goat, is induced, and I think I may say reasonably and naturally so, by the fact that this is your cap."

At this unexpected and apparently brutal assertion on the part of her husband and protector, her resentment was furious. The shock was so great that for some moments she was unable to articulate, but finally managed to gasp: "Are you crazy or a fool?"

To this plainly assertive interrogatory the doctor's good nature was not in the least disturbed, suggesting strongly that "he'd been there before many time," and he replied with that bland good humor for which he was celebrated:

"As to the first item in your indictment, I think there is sufficient external evidence that my condition is not far from normal. As to the last item, as a general proposition, I might honestly plead guilty, but neither of the counts apply in this case. I think you are in the habit, when you get a new garment, to write your name on a piece of cloth and attach it in some convenient place; and in your caps you fasten it to the under side of the inner band. Is this not so?"

She admitted that to be the fact.

"Now," he said, "you take this cap, and look in the place where you usually place your evidence of ownership."

She reluctantly took the cap and turned to the place

indicated. Immediately the pallor of indignation gave place to the deeper scarlet of humiliation. She stood like one transfixed; she could neither move nor speak, and her eyes had a "way off" look. The doctor took advantage of this short respite in the animated and one-sided dialogue, and unfeelingly indulged in uncontrollable laughter. This brought her back to the terrible reality which she must face, and she made use of the only weapon then appearing, and, indeed, the only one necessary to relieve a woman's pent-up feelings, no matter what the cause, viz., to open a tirade of abuse on her husband. She metaphorically "wiped up the floor" with him. She rehearsed all his past and present shortcomings and long-goings, which it must be admitted were numerous. A storm of epithets waltzed up and down the room and settled on the doctor's devoted head, among the mildest of which were: "You are an unfeeling wretch to abuse me in this manner! I have always more than half-suspected that you lied to me about the cost of that cap, and now I know you did. I will never put the ugly thing on my head again, and you may get me a decent cap before you go to bed tonight," and she attempted to throw it across the room, but true to woman's aim it went in exactly the opposite direction. At that moment the maid had just entered the room with a tray of delicacies for her mistress' breakfast. The cap landed with baseball precision and nearly with the same impact in the girl's face. Thinking that she was the victim of some murderous design, she gave a scream, dropped the tray and fled from the room.

This seemed to be the climax of this morning's upheaval. She started to leave the room, emphasizing her

vigorous tread with, "I'll never go to another Eastern Star meeting as long as I live, and I'll never speak to one of the members again—the mean things."

Seated before the glowing grate in her cozy sitting-room she was attempting, and with some success, to regain her mental poise, when she was startled with the sudden recollection that she had engaged a confidant in Lancaster to act as detective in the recovery of her property. She saw no way but to call her up and make a full confession, which she heroically did, concluding with:

"Now, you must promise me as a friend and on your honor as a member of our great and noble order that you will never, never lisp one word of this to any living being," which assurance she got in the following strong language, "Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, and my right hand become palsied, if I even allow my own thoughts to dwell on the subject for one moment."

Notwithstanding, the whole town had the full story in less than half an hour.

Tragedy of a Needle

THERE are some epochal incidents encountered in passing through this short and troubled life, which make all other phases of existence pale into insignificance; and the one which for tragic and dramatic intensity eclipses all others—which obliterates all social distinctions, which makes "the mind of the king and the beggar, the rich man and the poor man, to be as one"; which banishes all pride and sense of joy; which makes all the other troubles of life seem of little moment—in a word, the one which concentrates into one unguarded, unsuspecting, unavoidable moment an epic of mingled surprise, exquisite pain and causes the concentration and explosion of every evil impulse—that one supreme event is when one innocently, unexpectedly, unconsciously, without premonition or warning, and with an impetus induced by muscular relaxation, and the pleasurable anticipation of repose, rest and contentment, sits down on a vicious unfeeling, determined properly directed PIN.

The sensations, evolutions, gymnastics and humiliation of every victim of this tragedy is the same. Every muscle, nerve and instinct of the entire body springs into instant action and brings him or her to an upright position, with a yell, which startles the whole household; with eyes bulging and an imprecation which chills Christian blood, the left hand—it is always the left hand—involuntarily seeks the spot which less than a

hundredth part of a second before had sought the repose of the chair, into the depths of which the victim is staring, trying to penetrate into the cause of the sudden and mysterious revulsion of feeling and purpose. For the instant all of life's interests are concentrated in the point of a pin, which although invisible assumes proportions of greater importance than all the ambitions, joys and interests of life.

Apropos of the foregoing profound philosophical observations, one of the fairest, best known and worthy of Lancaster's many fair and worthy matrons on a recent night, at a late hour, after the family had retired and were soundly sleeping, was burning the midnight electricity in faithfully doing the family weekly mending. She had arisen to listen to what some neighbors were talking about over the telephone, carefully placing her needle in the work and leaving it in the chair. Returning to her seat, her mind probably occupied with what she had heard, she inadvertently sat down on her work, but with a sudden change of purpose she regained her feet and discharged a howl that brought the whole family out of their sleep, out of their beds and into the sitting-room to learn the cause of this unwonted and terrifying commotion.

This was soon explained and a hunt for the author of this interruption to the quiet of the household, revealed the innocent half of a needle containing the thread, and as the other portion was nowhere to be found, the seriousness of the accident became inevitable, and remedial measures became at once the subject of animated, earnest and tearful consideration. The Gov—I beg pardon! It may be well to pause here and explain parenthetically that at the time this history was being

made, the family consisted of the father, mother and their youngest son. This son they call their baby, albeit he stands 6 ft. 4 in. in his stocking feet, and tips the scales at 240 lbs. That no hint may be given by which the identity of this family may be discovered, and for the sake of euphony, and for the purpose of this story, the designations from now on will be those familiarly and affectionately used in the family intercourse, viz., Pa, Ma, and Charles Bradlaugh—the son.

Pa insisted that a physician be sent for at once, but Ma thought best to try other expedients first, many of which were suggested and abandoned. Charles Bradlaugh said that he had learned at school that a needle could be drawn out of the flesh with a magnet, but the experiment lacked the means of demonstration by the absence of that little article. Pa said he thought that the electric light current woud answer the same purpose. Charles Bradlaugh said he knew better than that —he knew that the electric current would drive it in instead of drawing it out. But Pa cut the discussion short by saying:

"Young man, when you are as old as I am, you won't know quite as much as you do now. I hain't lived nigh onto seventy years without learning a few things. I know that a magnet is just bottled up electricity, and what that will do the real stuff in any other shape will do. It stands to reason. Now you get me your mother's old curling iron—the one without a handle—and I will show you a trick that you can't learn at school. A little reason and common sense is better than all the schoolin', especially in an emergency, when something has got to be done."

Charles Bradlaugh brought the implement, and Pa

said: "Now you get that piece of sand paper and scour both ends bright." While Charles Bradlaugh was doing this Pa got an extension, screwed it into a lamp socket, and adjusted the curling-iron into the other socket.

"Now, Charles Bradlaugh," he said, "you may go into the kitchen and stay there until I call for you." He adjusted his glasses, turned on the current, and said:

"Now, Ma, just show me the spot where the needle is and I will have it out for you in just a jiffy. It may hurt some in coming out, but don't stir till I have got it."

The location of the needle was indicated by a drop of blood which had oozed from the wound. The blood had also moistened the surrounding surface, making the conditions perfect for a good contact. Pa cautiously directed his improvised magnet to the "seat" of the trouble. He got a good contact, and sent 110 volts of electricity into that sensitive, quivering apprehensive bundle of nerves. Ma gave a whoop that startled the entire neighborhood, and caused the hair to rise on Pa's bald head, and executed a movement closely resembling that of a baseball player as he starts for second base. At the same time there was an explosion behind the portiere, where Charles Bradlaugh had secreted himself, that much resembled a pop safety valve of a steam boiler. At this Pa looked at the portiere with great severity and commanded: "Charles Bradlaugh, I want you!"

The young man presented himself, with an expression of countenance indicating that he did not fully appreciate the seriousness of the events then and there

transpiring. "Now," Pa continued, "you can go to bed; we shall not need your services any longer; your mother and I can manage this case." The boy obeyed with the greatest alacrity, with one hand over his mouth and the other pressed against his plexus. He jumped into bed, stuffed a large part of the sheet into his mouth for a buffer and laughed himself into a physical wreck. Pa was pretending to busy himself about something, not daring to look in the direction his wife was going the last glimpse he had of her; but he knew her eyes were upon him—he felt it—and he tried to nerve himself for the inevitable. At last, with a voice as low and soft as the first murmurings of an approaching cyclone, she said: "Have you learned anything else of great importance during your long life? If you should live seventy years longer and should accumulate as much wisdom as you have up to date, what a wise man you would be!" Then she said other things —in fact, many other things, all of which it would be of great interest to record, but cold type can convey but a very inadequate impression of the real force of pure Anglo-Saxon, after it has been vitalized in a boiling bath of caustic potash—so we forbear. She concluded by saying: "Yes," 'your mother and I can attend to this case.' So we can, but without your help, and you can go to bed."

Pa lost no time in making his escape and regaining his bed. He lay awake a long time pondering over the insignificance and helplessness of man.

Ma went to the kitchen, called up the "hired girl" and explained to her the nature and seriousness of her accident. Kate suggested that pork is "drawin'," and that perhaps a piece bound over the spot might draw

the needle out. Ma said that she was afraid that it had been driven in somewhere, but if it had not she thought that pork might find it; and anyway, it would do no harm to try it, and directed Kate to procure a liberal piece from the family pork barrel. Then a bright idea struck her, and she said, "No, you need not get the pork; I have got an idea. You know I am a firm believer in the Homeopathic law of *'similia simimilibus curantur'*, so I think a piece of ham would be better. You get a good thick piece, and cut it as high up on the leg as you can get it."

The slice of ham was brought with the assurance that it was from the exact locality desired. Then commenced the trying ordeal of binding it in place. For lack of practice in adjusting bandages, this was found to be a most difficult and exasperating job; but after several failures a plan was adopted which seemed to promise success. She went to her room and cautiously got into bed, carefully readjusting the slice of ham which had already slipped out of place. Her emotions were so conflicting that she was unable to sleep. She had great confidence in the erudition of Charles Bradlaugh, and his opinion that the charge of electricity would drive the needle farther in, soon became to her excited imagination a terrifying reality.

She was sure at one time that she felt it in her liver. Then again she was equally sure that she felt a pricking sensation in her stomach, to be followed by a more positive conviction that she plainly felt it under her left shoulder. During a lull in these painful forbodings she dropped into a troubled sleep, during which she dreamed that she was a pin-cushion, and that all her neighbors were sticking pins into her. Presently

she awoke with a start and instinctively felt to see if the slice of ham was where she left it. It was not, and after a long search she discovered it tightly bound around her ankle, where it had evidently exercised its function, as its shape was outlined by a very red and inflamed spot.

The family assembled in the dining-room at the usual hour the next morning, but the greetings were painfully formal. No one seemed happy except Charles Bradlaugh, and he was suffering all the agonies of suppressed merriment. The first reference made to the events of the previous night was when Ma said, with a withering glance at Pa:

"While I do not expect that needle is where I left it, yet I do not want to take the slightest chance of driving it in further, so I will take my breakfast on the mantle," at which Charles Bradlaugh had another pop-valve explosion, which was prematurely checked by a severe glance from Pa.

Breakfast was eaten in silence, and with great solemnity; at the close of which Pa suggested that he had better send for the doctor. Ma said: "While I have little doubt that the needle is now imbedded in some vital organ, and it is beyond the doctor's power to do anything, yet you had better send for him—you at least will feel better when I am gone to know that nothing was left undone." This was said in a choking voice. Pa went to the telephone and called Dr. P., explaining briefly the situation, and admonishing him not to forget a can of ether, and whatever surgical instruments he might think necessary. The doctor replied that he would be up in about fifteen minutes. Ma said she would go back to bed and get ready for the operation.

In due time the doctor arrived. He divested himself of his overcoat and overshoes, and drew a chair up to the fire, to warm his hands, preparatory to the delicate operation that he had been called to perform. He is a tall man of very generous proportions, and the chair was a low one, so when his person came in contact with it, it was with great force. But no sooner had the contact been made than he regained the perpendicular, with an alacrity beyond the power of the kinetograph to record, at the same time uttering a howl, and an imprecation possessing the potential for the contamination of the moral atmosphere of a Christian home for many weeks, at the same time carrying his left hand—the left hand, remember—to the place which for the moment was of supreme interest to him. As soon as he had recovered from the first shock he looked at Pa with severe dignity, and demanded to know if that was a premeditated practical joke, and if so, he wished to say right then and there that it was a vulgar violation of the rules of common hospitality, to say nothing of the consideration demanded by the dignity and ethics of the medical profession.

Pa hastened to assure him that it was purely accidental, and that there seemed to be a mysterious coincidence, as that was the identical chair which the patient was using when the accident happened to her, and he wanted the mystery "probed to the bottom"—a witticism wholly lost on the negative humorous sensibilities of the doctor. The doctor sententiously remarked that "At this stage of the game it seems necessary that I submit to the first surgical operation," and requested a room where he might disrobe and make an examination.

Pa led the way, followed by the doctor and Charles Bradlaugh, who had been an interested and mirth-congested spectator. A superficial examination discovered the broken end of a needle protruding sufficiently to be easily removed. The doctor examined it critically and asked if the other half of the broken needle had been preserved, which it fortunately had, and was at once produced. The innocent cause of all this trouble had been broken at an irregular oblong angle, and the doctor, taking the two pieces and joining them, found that the coincidence was perfect, and that there was not the slightest doubt that it was the restored needle which was the cause of his professional call.

A very broad smile gradually spread over the benign countenance of Pa, and Charles Bradlaugh had to be spatted on the back to regain his breath. The doctor's offended dignity precluded any other view of this unlooked-for development of the tragedy on his part, than that of a strictly professional one. Taking the two halves of the fateful needle, he proceeded to Ma's room, where she had in readiness all the necessary preparations, including a humble resignation to any fate that awaited her. She was surprised when the doctor entered, and instead of a glittering cruel scalpel, he held between his fingers the two halves of an innocent looking needle. With little ceremony and a dignity bordering on austerity, he said:

"Here, madam, is the needle which you sent for me to extricate from your flesh, and unaccountable as it may seem to you, it found its way into my own gluteus maximus in close proximity to the gluteus medius," and showing her the evidence of the restored needle, he unbent to the extent of assuring her that if no new

complications developed she might reasonably hope for a speedy recovery, and bidding the family a dignified good-morning, he took his departure.

Pa in a few words explained the events that led up to the present status of the family disturbance. As soon as Ma fully comprehended the situation, she was probably the maddest woman in the whole town, just at that present moment. Had she been assured that the needle had penetrated to some vital organ, and with probable fatal results, it would have been a pleasurable sensation compared to that which now oppressed her. The evidence before her of the identity of the needle was hateful and she resented it. Had it been a square break she could have gotten much comfort out of the doubt of its identity, but as that was denied her, she could see no light ahead except a resort to woman's ultimate alternative, viz., to lay the whole blame on her husband. With this ray of comfort she hastily dressed and descended to the sitting-room.

She entered the room so suddenly that Pa did not have time to remove a very broad and luminous smile, the evidence of the riotous enjoyment which the turn of affairs was affording him. That smile was the electric spark which exploded the accumulated gloom, and had a most disastrous and depressing effect on Pa's normally exalted opinion of himself. The castigation which fell on his devoted head had little reference to the recent tragedy, but expanded into a categorical and hypothetical review of things covering a long period of omissions and commissions, under which he was rapidly contracting to dimensions which would have enabled him to have gone through the eye of that needle; but the psychological moment had arrived, when some-

thing happened. He had an idea! Drawing himself up to his full height, he said: "Madam"—he always commences in that way when he desires to impress an invidious comparison favorable to himself—"Madam, one word of mine spoken at the right time would have saved you the expenditure of the large amount of vital energy which it has cost to produce the composite cyclone—earthquake—blizzard—tornado—electric storm Mont Pelee eruption—and other things—which you indulged in last night, and have repeated this morning."

"Why didn't you say so," she energetically suggested.

"Because," he said, "I knew there was that dangerous accumulation in you somewhere, and I wanted you to relieve yourself of it; I knew you would feel better." Realizing that he was getting dangerously near the firing line again, he took shelter behind his idea and proceeded:

"You and Charles Bradlaugh were skeptical about my plan of extracting that needle, but it worked just as I expected and said it would; the sharp sting of pain which you made such a fuss over was caused by the withdrawal of the needle when the current had fairly got hold of it."

This lucid deduction impressed Ma, but it was not wholly convincing, and she ventured to ask how the piece of needle could get into the chair where the doctor found it, when it was on the opposite side of the room from where the operation took place? Pa colored perceptibly, but his ready wit and a long practice in the use of illogical logic, by which he has ever been able to convince a jury that a thing is so, when both he and the jury know it is not so, he replied: "Electricity is

a great mystery. There are many things about it that we do not yet understand; but we do know that it is quite lively and often skittish, and therefore we cannot always tell just what it is going to do. However, there is no doubt that it carried that needle and sat it down in the chair point up and left it there; and that is one of the mysteries, but it is no greater mystery than that it should pull it out to commence with."

This luminous exposition of the properties of this mysterious agent was convincing and conclusive. Ma's contrition was so complete that she would have fain confessed her fault and asked forgiveness, but that is not the way of woman. However, she looked it. The tense muscular contraction of her handsome face relaxed, her eyes, which had been set at an ominous angle, returned to their wonted affectionate softness, and the warm color of domestic peace overspread her countenance, all speaking plainer than words of the joy that comes from the confession of a fault with the accompanying assurance of forgiveness. Charles Bradlaugh, who had been an observant listener, when the climax was reached could stand it no longer; he rushed out through the kitchen, telling the girl that he was going out to the barn to tell it to the horse, and they would have a good laugh together.

The doctor is now seriously debating whether he will send in a bill for one dollar for a visit, twenty-five dollars for a surgical operation, or bring suit for three thousand dollars for damages to his person and feelings. He has taken counsel in the matter, and his lawyer has advised him to bring the suit, but to make the amount five thousand instead of three, and assures him that the case presents the only two necessary factors

for a successful issue before the typical twelve good men and true, viz., the doctor needs the money and the defendant is amply able to pay it; and he generously and characteristically offers to undertake the prosecution of the case on a contingent basis of 75 per cent. of the gross proceeds, the doctor to pay all expenses out of his part. The doctor is now engaged in an elaborate mathematical calculation to determine which plan will net him the larger sum; the one dollar for a visit or the successful outcome of the damage suit, on the conditions imposed by his lawyer.

The defendant has become somewhat alarmed over the serious turn that affairs have taken, and has waded through about two hundred tomes, looking for a precedent, and the nearest he has yet found is an account in one of the old classics where some Egyptians sat down on Cleopatra's Needle, but as this incident did not result in a damage suit, it does not seem important as a precedent. Further developments are awaited with much interest.

The Majesty of the Law

AN uninitiated, uninformed and guileless person, who by accident or necessity finds himself present during a session of a County Court, might reasonably ask himself if the performance in progress is a burlesque or a real attempt to dispense justice as between man and man.

To witness the trivial nature of a typical case, involving no principle, or sufficient money consideration to pay the expenses of the court for fifteen minutes of time, and in contrast with the insignificance of the matter involved, the ponderous legal machinery in operation, the array of witnesses, the empaneled twelve "good men and true," wearing an expression of blank indifference, the examination of witnesses, the objection to questions totally devoid of relevancy, the learned citations of the judge, the frequent recesses that he may consult decisions and precedents, the stenographers, the long table surrounded by lawyers, all diligently recording questions and answers, all so simple and inconsequential that it is not to be wondered at that the typical juryman is soon soothed into peaceful slumber.

It is readily, freely and even enthusiastically admitted that this impression may, and with little doubt does, result from the innocence, inexperience and lack of a comprehensive grasp on the part of the observer. And it is also admitted that underlying all this seeming triviality there are profound fundamental, occult prin-

ciples of law and ethics beyond the ken and comprehension of the surface-satisfied, self-imposed critic. Yet some excuse might seem admissible for not being profoundly impressed with the solemnity of a prolonged and involved legal fight over the value of a dog, by the consideration of a case which in its incipiency, progress and final disastrous results to the litigants is typical of a large percentage of the cases which burden our courts and tax payers.

Aaron Green and "Ginger" Gadsup lived on adjoining farms. "Ginger" was not the given name of Mr. Gadsup, but for some fiery characteristics which he freely exhibited when occasion demanded—and often when the occasion did not seem to justify it—he had early in life received this spicy nickname and it had followed him through life. These two men were far past middle life, and had been neighbors all their lives —indeed, they were both born on the same farms where they had always lived. They had got along with no more friction than comes from the trespassing of each others' cattle, fights between their children and their different views in politics and religion. This harmony would have continued to the end of their days, no doubt, had not a disturbing element entered their lives in the shape of a goat, which "Ginger" had purchased at an auction, although he had no intention of buying a goat, did not want a goat, and only bid fifty cents for him in order to run the bids up, out of pure sympathy for the poor woman who owned the animal. But it was "knocked off" to him, so he led it home, much to the disgust of his wife and the neighbors.

But the goat proved very tractable and intelligent, soon became a great favorite with the family, and was named Dick. Aaron had an instinctive aversion for

goats, and on their first acquaintance Dick evidently discovered, by the exercise of a well-known animal instinct, that he must be on the defensive from that time on; and it is also evident that he also determined on an aggressive policy. So as soon as his plans were well matured he commenced to annoy Aaron by frequent excursions into his fields. Aaron's attempts to chastise him were futile, for the goat took good care to keep out of harm's way. Aaron's wrath increased with each visitation, and he soon worked out a plan for revenge. He had discovered that the goat's favorite article of food was cabbage. So one morning before the goat was up he placed a temptingly large one in the corner of a fence, where he knew he could easily corner him. Knowing that he would soon come into his cabbage-patch for breakfast, he secreted himself, and, as he had expected, Dick was on hand at the usual time, and to Aaron's joy he was attracted by the bait in the corner of the fence.

The goat was so absorbed with the delights of the repast that he did not think of danger, and did not hear the stealthy tread of his approaching enemy, and before he had time to say baa, Aaron had him by the horn, and with a big club, with which he had provided himself, he belabored him most unmercifully. When he let him go the goat's personal appearance had so changed that he would not have recognized himself in a mirror. His face had already swollen to twice its normal size, and a stream of blood was pouring from his nose. Aaron watched him limp toward home with great satisfaction, and in his prayer that morning (he always had morning prayers) he thanked the Lord for "His tender mercy and guiding care."

When the goat got home he was so weakened by loss of blood that it was with much difficulty that he could

stand, but he managed to drag himself into a back pasture, and there secreted himself in a clump of bushes, and for several days nursed his wounds and his wrath. When he had so far recovered as to be presentable his plan of action was fully developed. He returned to the house, and the family thinking him lost received him with many marks of affection, which he returned in goat language, and caresses. He wandered around the house for several days, and to look into his soft eyes and placid countenance no one would have thought that there was canker gnawing at his heart. But he was watching his opportunity, which soon came.

One rainy afternoon Aaron called on his neighbor for a friendly visit. Several other neighbors had also dropped in. The goat saw him enter the house, and knew his opportunity had come. He secreted himself behind the barn-yard fence and watched through a crack. Presently Aaron came out and started up the road toward home. Dick walked out into the middle of the road and stood watching him; measuring the distance with his eye, he waited until Aaron had placed sufficient distance between them for a good impetus, when he started at a slow trot which gradually quickened into a run, and when he had approached the object of his vengeance he was going at baseball speed, and when near enough to deliver the blow he left the earth, and gave Aaron a battering-ram blow, just below the small of his back.

Aaron executed a gymnastic stunt that would have been the envy of an acrobat could he have seen it. He was lifted into the air several feet, his head and heels touching, and he came down in a heap and lay as one dead. Dick trotted back down the road, vigorously wagging his short expressive tail and giving a series of

satisfied bleats, as much as to say, "Now, old man, we're even." He did not stop at the house, but continued at a sharp trot over the hill into the pasture where he had formed his plan of vengeance, and did not appear at the barn again until forced to do so by the lateness of the season.

The people at Gadsup's house saw the episode and the boys went into the air and yelled with delight. As the old man did not rise, several of the men went to his assistance. He had recovered his senses sufficiently to ask if he had been struck by lightning. He was indeed severely injured. They extemporized a litter and carried him home, put him to bed and sent for a doctor. The doctor examined him carefully, assured him that there were no bones broken, and that as soon as he recovered from the shock he would be all right again. But his recovery was very slow. He was subject to chronic rheumatism and the trouble was aggravated by the shock, so that he was compelled to lay in bed for many weeks, and it was several months before he was able to work.

In the meantime it was suggested to him, by some of his neighbors, who held old grudges against "Ginger," that he bring a suit for heavy damages. Aaron was possessed of a revengeful nature, and, despairing of ever being able to even up with the goat, this motive, coupled with his cupidity, made the suit for damages seem very attractive, and he had soon determined on this step. His good and sensible wife expostulated with him, and tried to persuade him to drop the matter. She said:

"It will cost a lot of money, and you may not win, and if you do the lawyers will take all you get, and we shall have all the trouble for nothing, and perhaps lose what little we have laid by for our old age."

Besides, her sympathy was with the goat. But Aaron was obdurate. He said:

"See how I have suffered, and the time I have lost, when I oughte'r been doin' my fall work, and think of the doctor's bill! 'Spose I'm agoin' ter stand all this and never say nothin? No-sir-ree, I ain't made that way. I shall go to an honest lawyer, Judge Weedum, and I know he'll advise me just what to do, and won't charge mor'n all outdoor nuther." So the next morning he hobbled to the barn, hitched up old Nell, drove to the village and to Judge Weedum's office.

Judge Weedum had indeed the reputation of being an honest man—or rather perhaps an honest lawyer, which to the minds of many of experience has a different significance. In fact, perhaps he was too honest to succeed in his profession; anyway, as a lawyer he was a failure. He was well educated and well up in the classics and higher literature, and when he had occasion to speak in public, on any subject, or on any occasion, his speeches were interspersed with frequent Latin quotations; so notorious was this practice that the boys laughed when he embellished a period with a classical quotation; when he would wither them up with the caustic observation, "I'm not talking to hoodlums or the ignorant, I'm talking to scholars."

He had very few clients through life, and how he managed to live was an unsolved conundrum; but by writing deeds, making out pension papers, marrying a few couples and unmarrying more he had managed to keep the wolf at a respectful distance. He was very appreciative of little preferences, and his title of Judge came from having acted as judge in the poultry department of the county fair. He was very proud of the dis-

tinction, and from that time on he enjoyed the prefix of Judge.

When Aaron presented his case the Judge saw in it the opportunity of his life, knowing that Aaron had quite a snug little sum in the savings bank. He said:

"This is a matter of such gravity in its immediate bearing, and involves such vital principles of personal security and private rights that we want to go slow; be sure we are right, then go ahead—*actune ne agas,* as the classics have it." He went through the indices of many of his ancient law books. First he looked up "injuries." Then he looked for "injuries by a goat," but found nothing bearing on the case until he came to a court decision, in a case where a woman struck her husband over the small of his back with a stick of wood, which he thought might furnish a precedent. He said:

"To be sure the weapons are not the same, and still in a sense they are the same; the goat used the weapon which nature gave him, and the woman used the one that nature had thrown in her way, so I am very sure the parallel is complete, *cadit quoestio.*"

The logic and Latin were equally clear to Aaron.

Aaron thought the damage ought to be placed at about $500. Mr. Weedum asked how much Mr. Gadsup was worth. Aaron said:

"He has got about fifty sheep, thirty head of cattle, one goat, owns his farm and has about $500 in the bank —wal, I should say, for a guess, that he is wuth about $5,000."

Then said his counsel, "bring suit for $5,000, by all means." This advice stimulated Aaron's avariciousness, and he saw easy wealth within his grasp. Mr. Weedum assured him that there could be no possible question as to the favorable result of a suit for dam-

ages, and $5,000 was little enough for all he had suffered, mentally and physically, and it could be easily demonstrated before a jury that he was maimed for life. The outcome was that Aaron instructed the lawyer to bring suit for $5,000, and to attach all of defendant's property. So Aaron rode home feeling about five thousand dollars' richer, and the Judge was richer by a $10 retainer, and both men were happy.

When the writ of attachment was served on Mr. Gadsup, he gave expression to his wrath in a round of profanity that made the goat stop his nibbling and stare in amazement. He fully established his right to the cognomen of "Ginger." He immediately went to town and consulted a lawyer by the name of Rea. This man had a wide reputation as an astute lawyer, and it was generally understood that a client of his was sure of his case, regardless of its merits. After hearing all the details, Mr. Rea said:

"Mr. Gadsup, you have a perfectly clear case; the goat had ample provocation for the assault, and no reasonable jury could decide the case against you. My advice is to fight it to the bitter end."

Mr. Rea knew of "Ginger's" little bank account. Mr. Gadsup went home full of fight, enthusiastic in the conviction that he could down his (now) enemy in a legal set-to as easily as the goat did on the highway, and with equally disastrous results.

When the September term of court convened, all parties were present with their witnesses, lawyers and "rooters." This case was of so much more importance than most of the cases on the docket, that it had become quite notorious, and when the case, "Green vs. Gadsup" was called, the court-room was filled with spectators, all

discussing the different aspects of the case, and predicting the result of the trial.

There was much difficulty in getting a jury, so many had expressed an opinion—some in favor of Mr. Green and some in favor of the goat. At the end of the second day a jury was secured, which looked as if they had never formed an opinion about this case or anything else.

At the proper hour the next morning the court came in. The Judge in his place looking very grave, the two lawyers in the case seated at the long table with voluminous briefs, that were anything but "brief," volumes of formidable looking legal books piled before them, and both having a drawn expression, which told of the great mental strain which the preparation of this case had imposed upon them. And then the array of stenographers, sheriffs, lawyers and the imposing and impressive dignity and deliberation of the initial preparations gave one an oppressive sense of the dignity of the law.

Mr. Green was the first witness called to testify in his own behalf. With painful effort he limped to the chair with the aid of two canes. This was the spectacular part of the program, advised and arranged by his counsel. He gave a history of all the direct and collateral incidents leading up to the tragic culmination of the event, omitting, however, all reference to the irritating original cause of the estrangement between himself and the goat. Then he was turned over to Mr. Rea for cross-examination.

Mr. Rea: "Mr. Green, you say you were assaulted by a certain goat. How did you know it was this particular goat or any goat at all?" This was a poser. He had not thought of it in the light of a doubt regarding

the fact. He stammered and had to acknowledge that he did not know it.

Mr. Rea: "Then how did you know that any goat assaulted you?"

The witness: "Because folks who saw it told me so."

Mr. Rea: "Then all you know about it is hearsay, is it?"

Aaron admitted that it was.

Mr. Rea: "Do you not know that hearsay evidence is no evidence at all? That you must see a thing yourself to give any weight to your evidence?"

Aaron did not know that.

Mr. Rea: "When you were picked up did you not ask if you had not been struck by lightning?"

Yes, he did.

Mr. Rea: "Can you take your oath from your own personal knowledge that you were not hit by lightning instead of a goat?"

No, he could not.

Mr. Rea: "Assuming that it was the particular goat owned by Mr. Gadsup that assaulted you, did you ever give that goat any provocation for harboring any grudge against you?"

Mr. Weedum: "I object."

The Judge: "Please state your objection."

Mr. Weedum: "The question is a reflection on man's higher nature, and would reduce his moral and intellectual responsibility to the level of the brute creation."

After gazing at the ceiling for some minutes the Judge said: "The objection is well taken but the subject is so profoundly involved that I shall be obliged to take more time for its consideration, and the court is adjourned until 10 o'clock tomorrow morning."

When the court came in the next morning, the Judge

gave his decision on the important question which he had been considering during the night. He said:

"I have been over the various authorities and decisions bearing on this matter, and the objection to the question in the shape in which it was put is sustained."

Then said Mr. Rea: "Did you ever give Mr. Gadsup's goat a 'lambasting' with a club?"

He admitted that he had.

"How big was the club?"

"I object," said Mr. Weedum.

"State your objection," said the Judge.

Mr. Weedum: "There is an evident intent to discredit the moral and humane nature of my client, and if perchance the club should seem to be of inordinate size for the proper chastisement of a goat, the fact might be so perverted as to work the injustice which I have mentioned."

The Judge: "The objection is well taken and is sustained."

Re-direct. Mr. Weedum: "Mr. Green, will you explain the provocation which the goat gave you for the 'lambasting' (to use the vulgarism with which the opposing counsel has seen fit to stultify himself. This with a withering glance across the table at his, for the time being, enemy) which you justly gave the goat?"

Mr. Rea: "I object."

The Judge: "State your objection."

Mr. Rea: "I object on the ground that the question implies an admission that his inhuman (as will be shown) treatment of the goat was justifiable. The consideration is goat without embellishments—just goat."

The Judge: "The objection is sustained."

This ended the examination of this witness.

The next witness duly sworn was a Mr. Humstrum.

Mr. Weedum: "Mr. Humstrum, were you cognizant of the fact that Mr. Gadsup had in his possession a certain goat at a period about a year back?"

Mr. Humstrum: "I knew he had a goat."

Mr. Weedum: "Were you present at the house of Mr. Gadsup on a certain afternoon on or about the twenty-first day of last July?"

Mr. Humstrum: "Yes."

Mr. Weedum: "Who else was present."

Mr. Humstrum: "Wal there was Joe Nelson, Jim Slowup, Hen Hopsum, Meechy Bascomb, Aaron Green and Sam Slochum."

"Did you see Mr. Green when he absented himself?"

"When he what?" queried the witness.

"Well, then, when he left Mr. Gadsup's house?"

"Yes."

"Did you notice a goat come out into the road?"

"Yes."

"Did he look fierce and revengeful?"

Mr. Rea: "I object."

"State your objection," said the Judge.

Mr. Rea: "It is evident that there is a diabolical and well laid plot to hold up this goat as a monster of depravity; besides, this is a question for alienists, not for the snap judgment of a man entirely ignorant of the science of psychology."

The Judge: "This is a question of much importance. I cannot give an immediate decision, and a recess will be had until this afternoon, that I may have time for its proper consideration."

When the Court came in in the afternoon, the Judge announced that the question might be asked.

Mr. Weedum repeated the question.

The witness: "Wal, he looked kinder in arnest; I can't say no more nor that."

"What did he do next?"

"Wal, he started up the road at a dog-trot, and kept goin' faster and faster till he got mos' to Aaron, then he gave a jump and hit him somwhares in the back, as near as I could see, then he come trottin' back sorter grinnin' like, jes as tho' he tho't he had did somethin' smart."

Mr. Weedum: "Did you go to the assistance of Mr. Green?"

"Yes, we all went."

"What did you do?"

"Wal, we got a board, put him on it, an' carried him to his house."

"Did he speak?"

"Yes, he wanted to know if the lïtnin' had struck him. We told him it was a goat, and he said as how that was the next thing to it."

"Did he seem to be much hurt?"

Mr. Rea: "I object; that is a question for medical experts."

Mr. Weedum: "I withdraw the question."

This ended the examination of this witness.

The next witness was for the respondent. His name was James Wiggers, but he was known far and near as Jolly James, for the reason that he was always happy. He was the incarnate optimist—the personification of "Sunny Jim." He only saw the funny side of things, and probably never had a serious thought in his life. He gave no "thought of the morrow," so he had not experienced that condition called prosperity; but having a thrifty wife with a character sufficiently forceful to take the brunt of things herself and to inspire her hus-

band with a little periodic activity, they managed to get a living out of the little farm on which they lived. It was known that Jolly James witnessed the scene in which Aaron got the better of the goat and so he became an important witness for the respondent. Taking the witness chair, and after the usual preliminary questions he was asked to tell what he knew about that important episode.

"Wal," he began, "I was ridin' past Aaron's one morning airly in the summer, and I seed Ginger's goat in Aaron's garding a eatin' cabbage, and I seed Aaron a slyen up to him, and I thinks to myself now is a chance fer some fun, He! He! He! Wal, the fust that goat knew Aaron had him by the horn and he give him the dogondist wallapin' that you ever seed in all your born days, He! He! He! Wal, sir, when the goat gut away and started down the road he was the wust used-up goat I ever did see. His face looked more like a biled pumpkin than it did like a goat, He! He! He! and he went limpin' down the road sorter dazed. Aaron was awful mad and swore worse'n Cap'n Kid, and the last thing he did was to give the goat a kick, and say, 'You damn goat, if you ever come back here you won't git orf quite so easy,' He! He! He! Wal, my opinion allers has bin that the goat served Aaron right."

The Judge, interrupting: "Mr. Wiggers, we do not want your opinion, we only want what you know about the matter."

"Wal, that is all I know."

And he was turned over to the opposing counsel.

Mr. Weedum: "Mr. Wiggers, will you please define wallaping?'" Jolly James looked mystified.

"I mean, what does the word mean?" said Mr. Weedum.

"Why it means—it means just wallapin'." He was excused from further questioning.

It would be impossible as well as uninteresting to follow the trial through all the labyrinthine intricacies of the next three or four weeks while the trial continued. Everyone who had any knowledge of Mr. Gadsup's ownership of a goat, and everyone who had ever heard that he had a goat, was called as a witness. The former owner was called to testify in relation to the goat's character. The private character of both families was fully ventilated, and especially anything that was detrimental to them was fully exploited, and many times magnified.

The proceedings, with all the endless irrelevant questions, with the objections, wrangling between the lawyers, the judge's ponderous decisions dragged through its weary length until the climax in the evidence was reached, in the event of expert testimony. The physician who treated the patient was called, and the following is a verbatim copy of his testimony:

After the usual preliminary questions, the doctor said:

"I was called to see Mr. Aaron Green on the occasion of the injury now being considered, and found him suffering from pronounced ecchymosis of the cuticle, a deep contusion of the gluteus maximus extending well over the gluteus medius and bordering on the gluteus minimus. I diagnosed a slight fracture of the sacrum with laxation of the coccyx. I was also suspicious of spinal concussion and felt sure that the case would develop well marked symptoms of fracture of the spine in the lumbar region with extravasation of cerebro-spinal fluid. As the case progressed there was developed the sequelæ of concussion of the spine from transmitted energy. Disturbance in the aqueduct of

sylveus, or inter-a-tertio ad quartum ventriculum and hemorrhage into the pons varrolii."

After the doctor had finished his testimony, Mr. Rea said:

"Now if the doctor will be so good as to tell us what ails the man it may throw some light on the case." The doctor felt that this was a reflection on the medical profession, and he replied with much austerity: "I have stated the case as succinctly as language can make it, and if the gentleman is unable to understand plain language it is his misfortune, not my fault"; and he walked out of the court room with an air of offended dignity, and the questioner looked very silly.

The next witness was an expert from a distant city. His testimony was very brief and to the point. He said:

"I have given this patient a thorough examination and with the exception of a slight cicatrix, a result I presume of the contusion which has been referred to, I find the man in perfectly sound physical condition, with the exception of rheumatic diathesis which is evidently chronic, and has been about him for a long time."

This completed the testimony, and the next day was assigned for the arguments by the counsel. This had been looked forward to by Mr. Weedum as the event and opportunity of his life—to have a case of such importance as to give ample scope for the exploitation of his accumulation of legal and historic lore, and adequate inspiration for the exercise of his forensic powers. Accordingly he spent a greater part of the night in brushing up his ancient suit of clothes and more ancient Latin, and in arranging his notes and his speech, which had been constructed not so much with reference

to his client's case as for spectacular exhibition of his learning.

When the court came in the next morning, Mr. Weedum was in his place with a formidable pile of papers, notes and citations before him. It may be well here to mention a few more of the peculiarities of this gentleman. As has been said, he took much pride, and justly, in his classical learning, and never hesitated to sacrifice logic for effect in the exhibition of his erudition. He had a habit when approaching a climax of rising on his tiptoe and at the end of a Latin quotation which rounded out the period of coming down on his heels with great force to give further emphasis to his point.

When all was in readiness Mr. Weedum arose, deliberately, majestically and stood for some time, seemingly several minutes, facing the jury box. Commencing with the foreman he successively looked each one in the eyes, as if to impress him with the solemnity of the occasion, and as a premonition of the coming storm; then he assumed a poise as if he felt he had become the arbiter of destiny. At last he spoke:

"Gen-tle-men of the Jury: During the progress of this momentuous trial you cannot but have been profoundly impressed with the great fundamental principles involved in the discussion, and your tender hearts must have been wrung by the contemplation of the great depths of depravity to which man may descend. Here you have on one side a man of noble and exalted character, the exponent of all that is sublime in human nature, a man of sorrows and long suffering, of great forbearance, of faith, hope and charity, fallen victim to the wicked designs of a man fallen so low in the scale of humanity as to be hardly worthy to be

called a man—*agnis in herba.* Let us take a brief review of the facts of this tragedy. Here is a man with all the attributes of nobility which I have just enumerated, peacefully and unostentatiously meandering his way towards his hospitable and happy home, in the public highway—in the public highway, gentlemen—his mind occupied in contemplating the sublime beauties of nature all about him, bathing his contented soul in the peace which passeth understanding, which comes from communing with nature's God, and in the consciousness of being at peace with all mankind and the world about him, when without warning or premonition, a savage brute, made more savage by his human associations, without just cause, and in total disregard of all the amenities of even brute life, surreptitiously, clandestinely, stealthily and with malice in his heart stole up behind his unsuspecting victim and assaulted him—assaulted him in the back, gentlemen—*aperito vivere voto.*

"What did that goat then do, gentlemen, I ask you? I will tell you what he did. He left his victim in the highway for dead, and returned to his human associates with a smile on his face. I am not prepared to say, gentlemen, that a goat is vicious, revengeful and dangerous, *per se.* It is the testimony of psychologists that domestic animals by long association absorb and become endowed with many of the attributes of their human associates, and this being true it is easy to see how this otherwise innocent and inoffensive four-footed quadruped came by his wicked and revengeful proclivities, when you consider the depraved nature of his master, and I might reasonably add that of Mrs. Gin—I should say Mrs. Gadsup."

That lady had found it difficult to retain her com-

posure during the caustic aspersions directed toward her husband, but now that she was to be implicated, she could restrain herself no longer, and she jumped to her feet and in a high, screechy voice said: "You bald-headed old villain, I'll goat you," and she started toward the sacred enclosure with fists clinched and brandishing them in a most aggressive manner. The audience thought when she said "goat" that she divided the word, and meant to make a pun, as it sounded as if she said go-at, and they all howled with delight. She would certainly have done the orator bodily harm had she not been restrained by the Sheriff, and forced back into her seat.

Mr. Weedum took the precaution, however, to change his location to the opposite side of the table, where he thought it would be safer. He remarked, *sotto voce,* "The goat is to be pitied, rather than blamed," and he cast a hurried and frightened look toward the point of danger. He resumed his argument: *"Aut amat aut odit mulier, nihil est tertium,"* and his face underwent a contortion that simulated a laugh, but no one else seemed to see the point, and so the joke was lost on an unappreciative audience.

He continued: "Returning to our subject, we left the victim of this tragedy weltering in his blood, and groaning in mortal agony, unable to help himself. Kind friends took him on a litter—a litter, gentlemen—and carried him to what was but a few minutes before a happy and contented home, but now alas how changed! His loving and faithful wife pulled off his boots and stockings, put him to bed and tenderly administered ginger tea. Then she sent for a physician, gentlemen. Your deepest sympathy must have been aroused by the recital of his months of suffering, both in body and

mind. You have heard how his crops went to waste for want of his fostering care. And now, gentlemen, I am approaching an incident in the proceedings which I know appealed to your intelligent judgment and aroused in your honest hearts a determination that justice should be done, and that the right should prevail! I refer to the clear, lucid, comprehensive testimony of the physician who was selected with such rare judgment at the critical moment, and who so faithfully ministered to him throughout the trying ordeal; and I am sure that his clear exposition of the case carried the conviction to your minds that this poor suffering man is destined to pass the remainder of his days a physical wreck, and yet his great soul triumphs over these physical infirmities, and we see him here patiently but firmly demanding that justice be done him, which issue I know is perfectly safe in your hands.

"You must have heard with much surprise the so-called expert testimony for the respondent. What the animus was that induced that gentleman to give such an immature snap opinion it would not become me to say, but the motive was so obvious that it could not have escaped your keen discernment, *argumentum ad crumeanum.*"

It would not be of interest to follow the orator farther, for although he continued for three mortal hours, there was nothing new developed, but the few simple and childish facts, as already stated, were embellished and amplified with platitudes, generously interspersed with Latin quotations. At the close of his peroration he said:

"Gentlemen, I have done. Throughout the trying ordeal of presenting this case with that clearness and minutiæ which I felt that its importance demanded, I

have been inspired by your loyalty, sympathy and intelligent attention. I have seen that my words have sunken deep into your hearts, and by that telepathic medium through which kindred souls find communion, I long since saw that your minds were made up and that a verdict for my client for the full amount of the small remuneration which his modesty has limited, will gladden your hearts to grant him. What the gentleman who has conducted the forlorn hope of the other side will say, I do not know, but I do know that the sophistries with which he will attempt to befog your minds will glide as harmlessly and as easily from the adamant of your convictions as—as—as water from a duck's back, to use a homely simile. Your minds have long since penetrated the thin veneer of his sincerity, and in your minds exposed him to that judgment so aptly characterized by that familiar classic, *quid non mortalia pectora, auri sacra fames.*"

He sat down and buried his face in his hands.

The sudden cessation of the speaker's monotonous voice woke up the Judge and some of the jury who had slept through the greater part of the trying ordeal, and all changed their positions and drew a long breath of relief. Court then adjourned until afternoon, when Mr. Rea was to reply to this supreme effort of his antagonist.

At the opening of the afternoon session, the court room was crowded, for Mr. Rea had a wide reputation for furnishing an audience with a toothsome entertainment when the subject was of the right nature to excite his rare ability for sarcasm. When the time arrived Mr. Rea arose and commenced his plea by saying:

"Gentlemen of the jury: It is my misfortune to have been deprived of the advantages of a classical

education when young, and so I shall not be able to entertain you in the language of Cicero, but what little I have to say I shall be obliged to express in prosaic, every-day United States. It is with much hesitancy, and with a consciousness of my own impotence, that I attempt to assail that wall of logic which my able opponent has so ably erected and fortified with those telling periods so richly embellished with classic lore; but, gentlemen, I will try not to tax your patience to the verge of somnolency, but will briefly consider some of the more salient conclusions so ably conjured up by my learned opponent."

Then he went over the evidence with its logical conclusions in great detail; the only striking thing about his effort was, how so able a man could contract his powers to the diminutive dimension of his subject. He concluded his somewhat tiresome argument with the following:

"But, after all, gentlemen, there are but two points that demand your serious consideration, to arrive at a just, intelligent and logical conclusion, and these are: First, the goat had ample provocation for inflicting the punishment he did on his cruel and pugnacious enemy, and he would have been unworthy the prestige handed down by his ancient ancestors had he supinely submitted to the great wrong inflicted upon him by Mr. Green. The second point is: It is in evidence that Mr. Green has simulated physical infirmities by which he has tried to make you think that his disabilities are serious and permanent. You heard the testimony of the physician who attended him at the time of the episode, and I readily admit, if he is suffering from the long list of incidentals which he enumerated, whatever they meant, it is a wonder that the man is alive, indeed if there is

anything in a name it would seem that any one of them should be fatal. On the other hand, you heard the sensible, sane testimony of the other physician, which evidence was wholly disinterested and must have impressed you as absolutely true. And now, gentlemen, in closing I will give you all the Latin at my command: *e pluribus unum, multum in parvo, ne plus ultra.*"

Mr. Rea sat down amidst the plaudits of an appreciative audience.

The next day was assigned for the Judge's charge to the jury. This event is popularly supposed to be the opportunity for the judge to tell the jury what it is all about, and instruct them how to decide So the occasion always attracts the genus loafer in full numbers, as well as the parties directly and remotely interested.

Court opened at the usual hour with a full house. The Judge's charge lasted two hours and forty minutes, and was of the usual perfunctory, involved character—indeed, so much involved in law, citations, decisions, etc., etc., that when the jury retired for deliberation the chaos which had gradually been taking possession of their minds, induced by the testimony, wrangling of the lawyers, the counsels' arguments and the many other distracting incidents, was now utter confusion. When they arrived at the jury room they lighted their pipes and all smoked for nearly an hour trying to restore their normal mental vacuousness. The deliberations of a jury are of course of necessity unknown to the world, and can only be judged inferentially. The court waited until 12 o'clock, but as no word had come from the jury-room, adjournment was had for dinner.

At about half-past three in the afternoon it was an-

nounced that the jury desired to come in for instructions. Accordingly they filed into their places. The foreman said:

"Jedge, we have done considerable talkin', but we can't git it through our heads which is bein' tried, Ginger or the goat."

The Judge found it very difficult to maintain the dignity of his position, but he restrained himself, and replied with caustic emphasis to the effect that dumb animals are not responsible for their acts, but their owners are liable for their depredations. They retired for further deliberation. About 7 o'clock in the evening it was announced that they had agreed. The court came in and the jury filed into place. To the question by the Judge if they had reached an agreement, the foreman said:

"Yes, Jedge, we have."

The Judge: "What is your verdict?"

"Wal, Jedge, I can't say that we've got any verdict. This is the way it is: When we fust went out we couldn't make up our minds who's bein' tried, but you set us right on that point. Then we commenced to talk. Some was fer Aaron and some was fer Gin—."

The Judge, interrupting: "We do not want to know anything about that part of it. You have either reached a verdict or you have not, and that is all we wish to know."

The foreman: "Wal, Jedge, that is what I'm tryin' to tell ye, and if you will give me time I'll try and explain."

The Judge saw that he was incorrigible and let him have his way. "As I was sayin, some was for Aaron and some for Ginger. Some thought that Aaron ought to have $50 and some thought Ginger ought to have it,

and so we couldn't seem to come to nothin'. Then three of them who hadn't said much spoke up and said as how both men was their neighbors, and they hadn't nothin' agin either of them, and they want agoin' to take sides one way nor tother, so we just agreed to drop it right thar."

The Judge realized the utter hopelessness of the situation, and instead of saying what his impulse was to say, he thanked them in the usual form, and told them they might go home, as their further services would not be required. And so the case went over for another year.

When the time for trial arrived again it was decided to take it to another jurisdiction, so as to have it removed from the atmosphere of prejudice and favoritism. The trial was a substantial repetition of the one just described, but the jury brought in a verdict for Mr. Green in the amount of $78.99. An appeal was taken on exceptions to a higher court. The exceptions were sustained and the case was remanded for a new trial. But by this time the bank accounts of both men had long ago disappeared, they had both mortgaged their farms for all they were worth, and that had also evaporated, so the great principles of law, ethics, personal rights, individual safety, and all the other fundamental principles so conspicuously involved in the case had lost their force, and both lawyers advised their clients to drop the case and each pay his own cost, which alternative they were perforce obliged to accept. And so the two men went back to their little farms, and their patient and heart-broken wives, sadder, madder and perhaps wiser men, and again "put their noses to the grindstone," from which they will not be released until the last verdict is rendered.

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